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the Countess of Minto
from the author

J E P H T H A H,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

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AND LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

“ Tacentem suscito musam.”

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TO
JAMES JOSEPH HOPE VERE, ESQ.
OF CRAIGIE HALL.
IN THE COUNTY OF EDINBURGH.

MY DEAR HOPE,

I inscribe this little volume to you, not merely as a testimony of my regard, and of our long-continued friendship, but chiefly from the recollection of the gratification which I received, and the advantage which I derived, from our literary intercourse in early life.

Yours ever sincerely,

GEORGE PRYME.

Cambridge, April 5, 1838.

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PREFACE

TO JEPHTHAH.

THE subject of this poem is Jephthah ; not Jephthah's daughter. Her sufferings and her fate have absorbed all the sympathy of the reader, and have engrossed all the attention of the writers, who have adopted this pathetic story. Thus the hero of the piece has been forgotten ; for, if I except a few retrospective lines in the prize poem of Smedley, I know of no one who has tried to delineate his character. The author of the book of Judges describes circumstantially her conduct, but rather with reference

to her father's feelings than to her own. He does not even record her name ; and he mentions not her existence till she becomes the object of a vow connected with the success of the arms of Israël. He was writing the history of his nation, and when Jephthah was called forth in a dangerous emergency to rescue it from impending ruin ; a short account is given of his previous life just sufficient to show who he was and why his aid was invoked. There is no formal description of him, as Hume or Robertson would have drawn ; but the few touches which incidentally appear are forcible and expressive. Every word has its import. They shadow out a magnificent outline, which I have attempted to fill up.

His feelings during exile are not described by the sacred historian ; but the bitterness of his answer to the elders, who offered him the command of the armies, shows what they must have been. We may discern a man of high talent and distinguished

bravery unjustly driven into banishment ; conscious of his own powers ; brooding over his wrongs ; restless and discontented for want of opportunity to gratify his intense love of distinction. But he seeks not, like Alcibiades or Coriolanus, to indulge this feeling, and satiate his revenge by joining the enemies of his country. He retires to the desert, inflicting no injury ; offering no disturbance to the welfare of Israël. He remains there long enough for a daughter to be born to him, and to arrive at maturity, when a crisis in the affairs of his native country opens to him a career of glory brighter than he could ever have expected. His whole subsequent conduct shows a mind deeply devoted to the success of his enterprise, actuated by that mixture of motive from which few men are exempt ; by a patriotism not quite disinterested—by an ambition far from selfish.

I have endeavoured to complete the picture by supplying the minute shades and probable incidents, without deviating from related facts. I have pre-

sumed the death of Jephthah's wife and of his father, as no mention is made of them after his recall. I have represented his followers as accompanying him, because it seems unlikely that they would wish to remain without their leader ; or that he should omit to avail himself of their services, and to procure for them a safe and honourable return ; I have described the periodical visit of a caravan to his abode ; because the country to which he withdrew lay in the line between Tyre and Babylon or Nineveh. But I have not ventured on the introduction of a betrothed lover, which adds such powerful effect to the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and which Buchanan has done in his elegant but feeble Latin tragedy.

In what way the vow was performed has been the subject of a controversy which can never be decided. Each view of the case seems beset with difficulties. The common translation of the Bible represents her as being sacrificed for a burnt-offering. But Dr. Randolph, late Professor of Theo-

logy at Oxford, in a sermon devoted to this subject, maintains a contrary opinion. He contends that verse thirty-one may be thus translated: "Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me shall surely be the Lord's; and I will offer to him a burnt-offering." The concluding verses, if we omit the punctuation, which is a modern invention, and the words printed in italics, which have no place in the original, will run thus: "She returned to her father who did with her to his vow which he had vowed and she knew no man and it was a custom in Isrâel the daughters of Isrâel went yearly to lament [*or to talk with*] the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year." I will not offend the reader by a long section of Hebrew criticism. Those who have curiosity to investigate the question may see one side of it ably advocated in the sermon of Randolph, and the other in Michaelis's Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, vol. ii. p. 269.

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JEPHTHAH.

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PROLOGUE.

ROUND Europe's northern shores in ceaseless course,
Encroaching or receding, flows the main :
From age to age, with unabating force,
Its varying currents tear the cultur'd plain :
Headland and rocky cliff oppose in vain :
And tower and town become its lasting spoil,
Embalm'd beneath the limpid wave. Again
In wide alluvion grows the fertile soil,
To man's dominion left ; for man's eternal toil.

So change the fashions, institutes, and forms,
Of Europe's active sons. The dark inroad
Of regal craft, or democratic storms,
By turns the social edifice corrode.
The painted habitant of cave and wood
Becomes the feudal chieftain. Onward still
He rears the lengthening line of bright abode;
To human effort gives magician's skill,
And moulds the stubborn elements to work his will.

But Time has passed with no reforming hand
O'er the dull range of Asiatic sway,
So flows the wave upon the Western strand
Of their vast, tideless, land-encircled bay.
The sons of Ishmael roam the waste to-day :
And he, the father of historic lore,
Might earth revisit, Persia's realm survey,
Arabian tent or Scythian horde explore,
And draw the picture now, he drew in days of yore.

And e'en that sever'd race in Egypt bred,
In deserts trained, and o'er a plenteous land
Throughout their long eventful manhood spread,
Restless in ease, subjection, or command ;
Till now, when want of scope restrains their hand ;
When war and faction may no more inspire ;
They hold communion with no Gentile hand ;
But ever sway'd by boundless, vague desire,
In eager quest of wealth still show their wonted fire.

Canto the First.

THE CHIEFTAIN.

“ Quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente
Ibimus O Socii comitesque.”

HOR. OD.

^αΟν θυμὸν κατέδων, πάτον ἀνθρώπων ἀλεείνων.

HOM. IL. ζ. 202.

. . . “ He fed upon the core
Of his sad bosom, flying all
The loth’d consorts of men.”

CHAPMAN’S HOM. IL. p. 93.

JEPHTHAH.

CANTO I.

THE CHIEFTAIN.

TIME had just ting'd his raven locks with grey
And chas'd some freshness from his cheek away :
But Jephthah's blood still urged its rapid course ;
His sinewy arm retained its youthful force :
Years had enfeebled no corporeal power ;
Blunted no sense ; brought on no sickening hour.
Yet all around him mark'd his alter'd mien ;
And saw not now that chief they once had seen ;

They saw no more the brow of gathering gloom,
The viewless eye, the torpor of the tomb ;
Nor quick emotion agitate his frame,
Come unprovoked, and vanish as it came :
The workings of some passion deep and strong
To those who join'd him late, or knew him long,
Alike inscrutable. Success had shed
Her brightest beams around his haughty head :
Year after year his widening sway had grown ;
And, all the desert yields, had been his own :
All the wild pleasures of that roving life ;
The keen excitement of victorious strife :
The vivid glow which enterprise bestows ;
The frequent interval of soft repose :
Thro' their long day, the pure ethereal gale,
Unpent in walled mansion, to inhale
Noon's grateful languor ; morn's athletic hour ;
And the safe heights of patriarchal power.
He grasp'd the cup, but drank not. To his lip
Its odour sickly ; bitter seemed the sip.

In manhood's bloom, impatient of repose,
He leads his eager followers on their foes.
The combat comes : his skill controls the fight ;
His voice, his valour, animate, incite.
The meed is theirs, of danger, and of toil ;
Enlarged dominion, and redundant spoil.
Why shrinks he from their loud acclaim ? and shuns
The rare carousals of Arabia's sons !*
Why 'mid the maddening hours of conquest spring
Unbidden thoughts to plant a secret sting ?
As if he felt in Victory's purple glow
Some mental simoom o'er his bosom blow.†

* In one respect the manners of the Arabs appear to have changed,—“ Their feasts are simple and sober.” So their new religion dictates ; but they are differently described in the curious romance of *Antar*, which bears internal evidence of being written during the lifetime of Mahomet, but before the extension of his religion over the deserts of Arabia.—See *Antar*, vol. i. p. 51, 53, 55, and 61, &c.

† The simoom is thus described by Bruce : “ I saw from the south-east, a haze come, in colour like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed or thick. It did not occupy twenty yards in breadth, and was about twelve feet high from

War's stirring scenes, its busy cares, are gone,
And time in smooth tranquillity glides on.
The quiet labors of the herdsman's lot,
The chase, the martial sport, delight him not.
Apart he roams—they mark his hurried mien ;
The sudden pause, tho' nought would intervene ;
His unclos'd lips' firm fixture ; piercing eye
Intently fixed on boundless vacancy :
Till oft, as tho' some vision met his gaze,
Unwonted transport o'er his features plays.
If then he smile, the only smile that e'er
Relaxed the settled lineaments of care ;
It comes not o'er him as the glowing ray
Which gilds the cloud in summer's stormy day ;
But like autumnal moonbeam, coldly bright,
Denoting absence of more genial light.

the ground. It was a kind of blush upon the air, and it moved very rapidly." Though he took the usual precaution of falling on his face and pressing it into the sand, he did not recover from the pestilential effects of inhaling the vapor, till long afterwards.—Travels, vol. iii. p. 357, 4to. edit.

That smile has vanish'd ; deeper gloom succeeds ;
His brow still saddens ; and his heart still bleeds.

Whence these emotions ? None presume to ask ;
They scrutinize—they argue.—Vain the task.
Each fresh attempt some other effort foils :
Conjecture baffled, on itself recoils ;
Till in this sage conclusion all agree,
“ 'Tis his fixed habit ; his infirmity.”

Thus passed the fierce meridian of his day ;
But eve approaching sheds a tempered ray.
Less and less frequent come those wayward fits ;
Till on his visage stern composure sits.
The change revives their wonder ; prompts again
Their wish to search the cause, or soothe the pain.
They deem'd that years had sooth'd his secret woes,
And calm'd his stormy thoughts to late repose.

Time heals all mental wounds, as poets show :
And cool Philosophy would prove it so.
The bitter change of outward circumstance,
Folly's sad sequence, Fortune's dire mischance,

Or Friend's ingratitude, the heart may wring,
And fix a deep, but not a cureless sting.
Time's gentle pinions fan the tortur'd breast
And lull its throbbing pangs to lasting rest.

One wound he never heals ; his quiet course
Inflames, not soothes, ambition's baffled force ;
Shows but the image of receding chance,
Of dread oblivion's undisturb'd advance.
That passion, nurtur'd once in youth's wild hour,
Exerts in manhood overwhelming power :
Checked by no failure ; cool'd by no delay ;
It shows in age no token of decay :
Reason's last effort, memory's latest trace
At former visions grasp with vain embrace.

That wound was Jephthah's. Mark'd from early
youth
For courage, talent, energy, and truth ;
By birth exalted, spurious tho' the claim ;
Hence must he found, and not inherit, fame ;
Yet vainly thought he that a father's care
Would yield him all he ask'd : occasion fair.

His brethren, envious of superior worth,
And proud of lawful lineage, drove him forth,
The sword his wealth. No portion in that hour
Save his strong arm, and bosom's stronger power.
To Gilead's hills he bade a long adieu,
As Tobe's rough deserts rose upon his view ;
Rais'd the black standard, emblem of his lot ;
The world forsook, but not its hopes forgot.

Around him gathered an adventurous band,
Rejecting all control, but his command ;
They whom misfortune's iron hand oppress'd,
Whose rights were not enforc'd, or wrongs redress'd ;
Whom debts entangling trammels circled round,
Or fancied merits ill requital found :*

* " There were gathered vain men unto Jephthah, and went out with him." Judges xi. 3. I have taken an ampler description of the classes, who must have composed his followers, from the account of those who resorted unto David under like circumstances at the cave of Adullam, " and every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them." 1 Samuel xxii. 2. By the

And oft would Arabs quit their native horde,
Seek his retreat, and own him for their lord.
His flocks increas'd ; his tented city spread ;
And Hebron's rocky vales their harvests shed.*

Here was some scanty food for glory : here
Was genius call'd for ; tho' confin'd the sphere.
To rule his lawless host ; their march to guide ;
And o'er their little counsels to preside ;
From Ishmael's sons their pastoral wealth to guard ;
Or from the robber tear his bad reward ;
Superior numbers baffle, or defeat,
And then to trackless fastnesses retreat.
Yet, when the novelty had pass'd away,
This petty warfare, this contracted sway,

Mosaic law the debtor was liable to be sold by his creditor.
See Michaelis' Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, vol. ii.
p. 162.

* " We saw the setting sun gild the five thousand tents which covered the plain as far as the eye could reach. Surrounded by camels, horses, and flocks, which concealed the earth, never had I seen such a spectacle of power and wealth. The emir's in the centre was one hundred and sixty feet long."—Lamartine's Pilgr. to Holy Land, vol. iii. p. 220.

But served to mark the contrast of his state,
And rouse disdain at such obscurer fate.

In this seclusion from the social league,
Its open turbulence, and dark intrigue,
No wreck of Canaan's parted grandeur lies,
No signs of Israel's coming glory rise,
To stir associate thought. There needed none ;
His mind was feeding on itself alone.
Hence those vain musings on the changeless past ;
Those dark forebodings o'er the future cast ;
That cold abstraction from all common cares ;
Neglect of joys, which every bosom shares.
Save when some brighter day-dream would intrude ;
Smooth his stern brow, and for a space delude :
Show what in other scenes he might have done :
Or what from chance or change might yet be won.
As he who long becalm'd on tropic seas,
Impatient watching for the morning breeze.
In feverous fancy views a verdant field
Replete with all his native regions yield,

And for a while enjoys the unreal scene,
Till reason's thankless dictates intervene.

One known affliction only mark'd his life
When hectic sickness seized his blooming wife.
From Yemen's dark-eyed damsels he had sought
A partner of his couch ; but not his thought.
One lovely daughter to his arms she gave ;
And in the desert found an early grave.
He lov'd her calmly ; with composure mourn'd ;
And to his wonted feelings soon return'd.

No human sympathy his bosom cheer'd ;
Among them, but not of them, on he steer'd
His solitary course o'er life's vast tide,
No land before him, and no mark to guide :
He mus'd on what they knew not ; or if known,
On what their minds no kindred thoughts would own.
Fervent and faithful all around him stood,
But sway'd by ruder thought of ill and good,
Men well content to seize the proffer'd joy,
Nor spurn the gold when mix'd with coarse alloy.

Life's richest years were thus consum'd in vain,
With little to achieve, and nought to gain.
Hope still recedes ; as age advancing shows
The hateful image of obscure repose.
And darker clouds seem'd closing o'er his head.
While not a ray its cheering influence shed.
His feelings, wearied by their wayward course,
Assumed at length a sterner, steadier force.
He grasped the gloomy certainty of fate ;
And met its hard decree with look sedate.
His long-devoted friends rejoiced to see
This outward change, this seeming apathy ;
And fancied his deep lineaments betray
The trace of passions that had past away.
Past, as volcanic streams o'er fertile plains,
Leaving their deep indelible remains.
The heedless peasant feels no treacherous heat—
No smoking fissure yawn beneath his feet.
He treads unscath'd the crater's rocky heap ;
Sees o'er its summit vegetation creep :

And thinks those fires, which tortur'd earth and sky,
Have sunk at last in still security.
But in those crumbling wrecks effete and cold,
The philosophic eye would still behold
Some latent seeds of subterranean heat,
With quick combustion's raging power replete.
So ceased the signs of Jephthah's mental fire,
The fierce emotion, not the strong desire.
Ambition's heavy slumber, not its death,
Oppress'd his bosom. Tho' no heaving breath,
No low faint murmur thro' the stillness broke ;
Nor feeble start, of quickening impulse spoke ;
Yet might the nice observer of the mind
In his calm visage note some trace behind ;
Some symptoms, few and feeble, yet distinct,
Of deeply-seated passion not extinct.

Canto the Second.

THE EMBASSY.

. . . “ Quod optanti Divûm promittere nemo
Auderet ; volvenda dies en attulit ultro.”

VIRG. *ÆN.* xi.

. . . “ This kind auspicious hour bestows,
What scarce a God could promise to thy vows.”

PITT.

CANTO II.

THE EMBASSY.

IN long repose had rested Jephthah's band ;
And simple plenty bless'd their barren land.
The damsel fearless sought the distant well ;
And loiter'd there her evening tale to tell.
The camel far amid the brakes retir'd ;
His patient energies no more requir'd,
And guarded only by his bell, attain'd,
The leafy food which other flocks disdain'd.
The ox securely scratch'd* the scanty soil :
Unwasted harvests met the reaper's toil :

* The whole power of those instruments (Egyptian and Syrian ploughs) seem to extend little further than to scratch

For dread of Jephthah's name prevail'd afar,
 And stayed the ravage of internal war.
 The cymbal sounded only to the dance,
 Against the pillar lean'd the bloodless lance ;*
 Save when in martial games the comrades cope,
 Or chase the light gazelle, and nimble antelope.

Yet not to sports or indolence resign'd,
 Sank the rude virtues of the warrior's mind ;

the earth, rather than what in Britain would be called ploughing."—Calmet's Diet. of the Bible, Fragments, p. 225.

* "The pillar is a straight pole, eight or ten feet high, and three or four inches thick, serving, not only to support the tent, but being full of hooks fixed there for the purpose, the Arabs hang upon it their clothes, baskets, saddles, and accoutrements of war."—Shaw's Travels, p. 287, folio edition. Holofernes made the like use of it.—Judith xiii. 16.

This custom survived the adoption of more substantial dwellings. The author of the Odyssey alludes to it in mentioning the palace of Ulysses at Ithaca,

Ἐγχοσ μὲν ῥ' ἔσπησε φέρων πρὸς κίονα μάκρων.

A. 127.

“Exin quæ mediis ingenti adnixa columnæ
 Ædibus adstabat, validam vi conripit hastam.

VIRG. ÆN. xii. 93.

Nature in kindness had enough denied
To quicken industry, to banish pride.
Alike the cares of herd and grain were shar'd ;
The game pursued, the general food prepar'd.*
Of various nations, ranks, and creeds compos'd,
On them one common object fate impos'd.
The stranger Hebrew, native Canaanite,
In friendly league forgot their deadly spite :
The restless Arab, the Phœnician cool,
Learnt other lessons in this arduous school.
Thus manners gave and caught a motley hue,
Each older usage blending with the new :
And thus religion, strong in those who swerve
From all its duties, yet its name preserve ;
Who blindly substitute tenacious zeal
For inward piety, they never feel,
Commingle much. The son of Israël prone
For Sinai's God, to bow to God of stone,

* " It is no disgrace here (in Arabia) for persons of the highest character to busy themselves in what we should reckon menial employments."—Shaw's Travels, p. 301.

Far from his temple and impressive rite,
Imbib'd some taint from all that met his sight.
The dark idolater reluctant saw
A purer worship and a wiser law ;
Confess'd their sacred source : but yielded still
Divided homage to the powers of ill.*
No wonder then, if slight the difference grew,
'Twixt Jewish heathen, and the heathenish Jew.

 Their chief alone had followed undefil'd
The strict observances and precepts mild :
Had gaz'd—intensely gaz'd thro' opening skies,
On brighter prospects shown to favor'd eyes—
On that foredoom'd event, whose coming cast
Its mystic influence o'er the distant past ;
Revers'd the withering curse of Adam's race,
And backward shed its full atoning grace ;
Tho' then in far futurity conceal'd,
By glimpses indistinct, but half reveal'd ;

* “ So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images.”—2 Kings xvii. 41.

Until Messiah, victor o'er the grave,
To those dim visions form and substance gave.

Hence would he mourn at each apostate fault ;
Their fears excite, their holier hopes exalt ;
But forced no bridle on the reereant mind,
For them no sacred shibboleth design'd.

In all but one extensive central tent,*
Was sober gaiety and full content ;
Unless a wish arose for stirring strife
To give some quickening zest to placid life.
They envied not the world they left behind,
Tho' casual tidings rous'd each curious mind ;
When some fresh rover join'd the warrior band ;
Or Tyrian merchants, from their busy strand,
Sought his dark banner o'er the trackless waste,
And took short solace after dangers past ;

* " This tent (of a Bedouin chief) is seventy-two feet long, and as many wide : it is of black horse-hair, and divided into three partitions."—Lamartine's *Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*, vol. iii. p. 190. " The emir's tent in the centre was one hundred and sixty feet long."—*Ib.* p. 220.

Well pleased to find among those lawless tribes,
One chief unstain'd by rapine, blood, or bribes.

Secure beneath the shadow of his power,
They snatch'd the enjoyment of the passing hour ;
Partook the feast with ready welcome shar'd,
From newly-slaughter'd kid, or lamb prepar'd,
The curdled milk, or that enlivening juice
Of Syrian vine, the strangers would produce :
Detail'd the fresh events in Israël's land,
The changes wrought by Time's disturbing hand :
With tales of eastern lore beguil'd the night,
Of fairy palace, and magician's might ;
Or lesser credence gain'd, whene'er they told
Of marbled floors, and domes of burnish'd gold ;
Of terrac'd gardens on Euphrates' side,
And all the vast array of regal pride,
Where Istakhar's eternal columns rise,*
Or Babel's tower that vainly sought the skies.

* Called by the Greeks Persepolis. Numerous columns, the remains of vast edifices of unknown antiquity, remained entire when Chardin visited it about a century ago.

And oft with more contemplative delight
They watch'd the lofty specks of brilliant light ;
Mark'd their slow motions thro' the cloudless
blue,

While neither tree nor hill perplex'd the view ;
Show'd how the learning of Chaldaean sage,
Tradition's rays, and deep research of age,
Arrang'd the constant orbs, and from afar
Foreshow'd the varied path of wandering star ;
Educing thence the change of human things,
Impending wars, or coming fate of kings.
Then thank'd their God, who plac'd those lights on
high,

Whene'er the sun had sunk beneath the sky ;
Who form'd the vaster moon's renewing face,
The short divisions of the year to trace.

Thus for a while were toil and care repress'd,
Till thirst of gain o'ercame the love of rest ;
When onward journeying with innumerable trains
They sought the glories of far eastern plains,

Voluptuous Nineveh's extensive walls,
Or stately pomp of Babylonian halls.
From whose rich realms and crowded marts they
bore,
The costly bales of India's spicy shore,
Her gems, her treasures of the sandal grove,
And brilliant webs that looms of Persia wove ;
Exchanging vestures of empurpled hue,
Bright as the ray that glitters in the dew,
Remotest Ophir's gold, and feather'd toys,
For man's sharp avarice, woman's lighter joys.
And that fam'd balm of Gilead's shady plains,
Unfailing soother of corporeal pains.
To Jephthah's morbid mind they brought no
balm ;
Their tidings but disturb'd his moody calm ;
Recall'd those early days, when hope was young ;
When every nerve to loftier aim was strung.

Then would his artless daughter think he mourn'd
For those bright vales to which he ne'er returned,

And strike at evening hour her simple lyre,
'To soothe the feverous sorrows of her sire.

1.

They tell me of lands, where the streamlet is
 flowing
Exhaustless and clear, in its deep-bosom'd
 bed:

Where the tree throws its shade ; the gay flow'ret
 is blowing ;
And freshness and verdure around them are
 spread.

2.

Of lands, where the vine pours its gladdening
 treasures ;
The bee's luscious stores in profusion are found ;
And the fervor of thirst, but enhances their
 pleasures,
While fruits ever fragrant and cooling abound.

3.

Tho' dreary the region that circles our dwelling ;
And simple the viands these deserts afford ;
Yet the strong tide of health in each bosom is
 swelling,
And gives a keen zest for our temperate board.

4.

Yet sparkling and pure is the current of feeling,
That springs in this bright unadulterate air :
No semblance of kindness and calm is concealing
 The snares that a rival may darkly prepare.

5.

Amid spacious abodes, the rich inmate reposes
On couches of cedar, in silken attire ;
But the thorn will be felt, when we grasp at the
 roses ;
And luxury leads but to restless desire.

6.

We know not the dread of disaster and danger ;
No fortified wall for protection we see ;
But true to each other, and kind to the stranger,
We roam the wide waste, independent and free.

Her gentle solace never flowed in vain,
Tho' widely wandering from his source of pain.
In childhood she had grieved to see his grief,
Not ask'd its hidden cause, but aim'd relief ;
Had watch'd beside his couch in mute suspense ;
Brought the sweet flower to charm his languid sense ;
Arranged his scatter'd hair, caress'd his hand,
And sooth'd distress she could not understand.
Her riper youth his grief would fondly share ;
Less infantine, not less devote her care.
Bred in the desert, with no kindred soul
To train her wishes or their course control,
She shrank from contact with each ruder mind,
And her chief intercourse to him confin'd

In singleness of heart towards her sire
Was center'd every pleasure, fear, desire ;
While he, bereft of other earthly hope,
Gave to parental fondness ampler scope.

Thus years had past, when growing rumors spread
Of hostile force on Israel's frontier led ;
Of foray made by restless Ammonite,
The vain pursuit, or unsuccessful fight.

To her alone, amid this solitude,
The stranger's foot unwelcome would intrude :
For Jephthah lent an ever-anxious ear ;
And question'd much what tortur'd him to hear.
Inquiring each surmise and fact again ;
Probing his wound, tho' writhing with the pain.

She now with fond and vague alarm espies
Unwonted marks of agitation rise.
The flush which o'er his cheek a moment strays,
The upward glance, which bitter thought betrays ;
The lip's convulsive quiver soon at rest,
Give signs of inward anguish ill-suppress.

The storm has burst—fresh ill the tale inspires
Of Israel's ruler gather'd to his sires ;
How Ammon's sons, in mightier force array'd,
Would Gilead's unresisting vales invade.
Long dormant feelings now regain their force,
And tear his bosom in tempestuous course.

“ Here,” he exclaims, “ had I a country still ;
Here were the chance each warmest wish to fill.
But opportunity ne'er comes—no ray
Breaks thro' the evening of my gloomy day ;
Nor in the dim horizon I discern
Presage of aught, for which my heart would yearn.
Hope as delusive as the dry mirage,*
No more the thirst of glory can assuage.
My sun is setting, not again to rise :
While the brief twilight of these sultry skies

* “ When any part of these deserts is sandy and level, the horizon appears at a small distance to be a collection of waters.”
—Shaw's Travels in Syria, 338. Diodorus, in his account of the African deserts, mentions the same phenomenon. Ἡδὲ (χώρα)

Just serves to show how little Fortune gave ;
And light proud Jephthah to his nameless grave.
Nameless 'twill be ; for this obscure command
Must vanish, as the track upon the sand.
It leaves no lasting fruit of Wisdom's reign ;
No nation's safety gain'd on battle plain.

“ Without a lineage—o'er my youthful head
No lustre from ancestral rank was shed—
First of my race and last—no son succeeds
To ask in vain his Father's glorious deeds.
'Tis well—that early prayer, unheard above,
Still leaves a daughter's unrepining love.
Some feebler mind may now my country guide,
And backward roll invasion's rushing tide :
In her enduring records live enshrin'd,
The lasting admiration of mankind.
I have no page in Israel's annals—I
Must live inglorious, unremember'd die.”

*ἄσπορος οὖσα καὶ σπανίζουσα ναματιαίων ὑδάτων, τὴν πρόσοψιν
ἔχει πελάγει παρεμφερῇ, lib. iii.*

A messenger approaches — swift his pace ;
And earnest import marks his eager face.
By Gilead's delegated elders sent,
Precursor of their visit to his tent.

Before him soon the humbled elders bend,
His searching eye and changing looks attend.
In youth's gay vigour had they known him long ;
Seen his high bearing in the martial throng ;
That calmly pensive mood in which he plann'd
Deeds of undaunted heart and potent hand :
That early comeliness and beaming eye,
Which met applause with careless ecstacy ;
That unrepres'd delight, when he received
His meed of honour in the fight achieved ;
That kindly look which each inferior found ;
Contempt of envy when a rival frown'd,
Now chang'd to keener not less generous traits ;
The lightning's evening gleam, not morning's genial
rays.

With timid voice of late defeat they tell ;
Of civil broils beyond their power to quell ;

That all to him have turn'd for late relief,
And crave his guidance as their martial chief.

The curling lip that show'd, amid their suit,
His mind was speaking, though his tongue was mute.
Feelings that now seem'd firmly fix'd, and now
Chasing each other o'er his quivering brow,
Perplex'd their thoughts, as eagerly they strain'd
To catch some token of their wish attain'd.

Hope from her long dull trance was wildly waking,
Joy's new-born beams upon his soul were breaking ;
And mingled now with deep resentment shone,
As Jephthah thus exclaimed, in haughty tone :

“ Misfortune those, whom wisdom cannot reach,
May feeble prudence and late justice teach.
Say, can the sons of my departed sire
With their pure birth-right to your rule aspire ?
Their's was the meed of favour ; exile, mine ;
My virtues doom'd their own reward to shine.

“ In the full spring of prosperous strength ye
grew,
Nor long neglected Jephthah rose to view,

Till now, dissolv'd in grief, dismay, and doubt,
 While discords urge within, and foes without ;
 Ye come, at length, to seek in manhood's wane
 Him, whose fresh energies with fierce disdain
 Ye spurn'd injurious.—Deign ye now to crave
 That, where he might not tread, his arm should fore-
 most save ?”

To whom the Elders — “ Therefore have we shown
 Shame at thy wrongs, and anguish for our own.
 Forsake thy roving troop ; our armies lead ;
 And rule o'er Gilead's land unrivall'd head.”

One moment's pause.—Then Jephthah's solemn
 voice
 Declar'd the final issue of his choice.

“ I claim no kindred in your alter'd land,
 No friend to stretch the gratulating hand.*

* “ We received them after the fashion of the Bedouin
 Arabs, taking their right hand, and raising it to the forehead.”
 —La Borde's *Journey through Arabia Petraea*, 125.

‘Οι δ', ὡς θυν ξείνους ἴδον, ἄθροοι ἤλθον ἅπαντες
 Χερσὶν τ' ἡσπάζοντο·

ODYS. Γ. 34.

Yet your's is still my country ; and your God
Has shewn the light by which my feet have trod.
Amid these deserts I have wasted life,
Or spent its efforts in ignoble strife,
Commander of this daring chivalry,
Outlaws of Israel, faithful still to me ;
Inur'd, in spite of danger, toil, and pain,
Thro' summer heat, and equinoctial rain,
Where your weak files would faint, in arms to meet,
And rush to fight, unconscious of defeat.
With them I come. But say, when ye have brought
Me home again ; when the brief warfare's fought ;
If God deliver to my hand your foes,
Shall Jephthah rule your land in late repose ?
Or one bright course of martial glory past,
Again to thankless privacy be cast ?"

Once more they answer'd—"We have urged in
truth

The wish of Gilead's manhood, age and youth.
High Heaven is witness ; wield with us the sword ;
And be thy meed according to thy word."

Canto the Third.

THE WARFARE.

Εἰς υἱωνος ἄριστος, ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πατρὸς·

HOM. IL. M. 243.

- .. Without a sign his sword the brave man draws ;
And asks no omen, but his country's cause."

POPE.

" Vincet amor patriæ laudumque immensa cupido."

VIRG. ÆN. vi.

CANTO III.

THE WARFARE.

IN Israel's army discord and alarm
Perplex each bosom, paralyze each arm.
Retiring close before the invading foe,
They just resist, but not return the blow.

Long had the impending danger gather'd force ;
As light incursion's desultory course
Wave after wave in dire succession roll'd
O'er ripening harvest, and defenceless fold ;
Awhile receding, soon to burst again
With deeper inroad thro' the wasted plain.

Their aged ruler, prudent, gentle, just,
And fit in tranquil times for arduous trust ;

To nurse the fresh resources of the state ;
To make it safely blest, or slowly great ;
With feeble hand the ravage had repress ;
And sunk, mature in years, to timely rest.
He left the land by struggling factions rent,
Till those who blam'd his rule, its loss lament.

Among their equal chiefs and equal minds
No master spirit strong ascendance finds.
All eager aim at power, while none obey ;
Or plan the warfare for the coming day.
One point of union had misfortune taught,
The call that Jephthah's guiding hand be sought.
Yet how to soothe resentment cherished long ;
Or kind requital ask for bitter wrong.

In doubtful thought impatient, oft they turn
To watch their elders' long-delayed return.
At length on eastern hills their anxious gaze
Afar discerns the sun's declining rays
In brighter gleam reflected. Soon appear
The belted horseman with his polished spear.

“ Not these our elders,” bursts the desperate cry,

“ ’Tis some new force to join our enemy.”

But straight amid the advancing group they hail

The sable banner waving in the gale ;

And forward rush, by hope or envy led,

To view their fresh allies, and future head.

As winds the strange array, each curious eye

Intent along the cavalcade would pry ;

And mark the rugged form, the wild attire,

That hide a dauntless heart, and warrior’s fire.

A bow and quiver well replete they bear ;

Long slender lance, and curving falchion wear ;

Weak in defensive armour, they relied

On active arm to ward the stroke aside ;

On rapid movement to perplex the foe ;

Impetuous shock, and unexpected blow.

A turban low, in lightest folds entwin’d,

Leaves their dark locks dishevell’d by the wind :

An ample cloak across the shoulders flung,

Is round the waist in leathern girdle strung :

The stirrup used for spur in flight or chase,
And flexile greave the leg and heel encase ;
While goatskin sleek, or chacal's shaggy hide
Is oft in rude accoutrement applied.

This common garb for warfare all assume ;
Yet keep some remnant of each old costume :
And coarse the texture, various is the hue,
That forms the vesture of this motley crew.
The steed of nice proportion shows his power
For onward course, or battle's steadier hour ;
Tho' meagre, sleek ; tho' fierce, obedient still,
And fondly faithful to his master's will.

In dusky roughness seems each bony cheek
Of sunny toil and simple fare to speak :
Thin, yet compact, appears the sinewy frame,
And darkly flash their eyes of subtle flame.*
The lip o'ershadow'd by its native hair
Gives tone of fierceness to their reckless air.

“ Their deep-set dark eyes sparkle from under their bushy black eye-brows, with a fire unknown in our northern climes.”
—Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins, vol. i. p. 52.

Undignified yet arrogant their brow ;
Not seeking, but conferring favour now,
Secure in conscious strength and Jephthah's fame,
Unwilling homage carelessly they claim ;
And glance with slight regard, or deep disdain,
On soldiers drawn from town or cultur'd plain.

The wanderer now recall'd to martial power
With quiet exultation greets the hour ;
Tho' deeper feelings mingled influence find,
As vivid recollections crowd his mind.
At former foes triumphant glance he sends ;
Or coldly recognizes ancient friends ;
Who coldly look'd on him, when fortune frown'd,
A boon refus'd, or kindly claim disown'd.

With fix'd regard the native Arabs gaze,
As Israël's wealth, and myriad host amaze :
Yet think of that magnificent array,
How slight the force in danger's troubled day.

While the trim Hebrew, vain of outward show,
And fancied good, which social forms bestow,

Had smil'd contemptuous on this ruder band,
And view'd with thankless doubt its lifted hand;
Were there not somewhat in each brow that quells
The rising scorn, and lighter thought dispels.
Thus ill at ease they meet the trying scene;
Hail the deliverance, but dislike the mean.
Perhaps they felt that Heaven's avenging power
Inflicted penance e'en in pitying hour;
But still indignant that the fickle crowd
To graven images the knee had bow'd,
When, turning from his fiercer wrath, he heard
The prayer, reluctant penitence preferr'd;
He smote their pride, and for deliverer gave
The spurious offspring of a foreign slave;
For strong alliance and supreme command,
A banish'd rover with his outlaw band.

Among them one stern veteran rode along,
Not rais'd by stature from the common throng,
No richer garb or armour caught the eye;
Yet none requir'd to ask, "Is Jephthah nigh?"

The troop in silence mov'd, too full the mind
For steady thought to form, or utterance find :
Till one, who long his words had ill suppress,
At length an elder warrior thus addrest.

“ Behold again our chieftain's altered mien,
His energetic hand and brow serene.
While all at this unlook'd for change rejoice,
No tone of exultation swells his voice,
Tho' his the great reward : no haughty look
Asserts the rank a rival ill may brook.”

“ We never knew,” his comrade thus replied,
“ Between ourselves and him the difference wide.
To freedom bounding, just escaped from ill,
With all that moderate wishes might fulfil ;
Enough for us the chase, the feast, the spoil,
The freeman's effort, not the workman's toil.
In the dull twilight fluttering near the ground,
Whate'er we humbly sought was quickly found.
He took a noonday flight, and from the sky
Cast o'er a vast expanse his longing eye :

With ravenous feeling saw afar the prey
Elude his grasp, and glide in clouds away :
Then stoop'd to earth, his plumage wet with dew,
And dwelt among the flock of feeble view.
I know him now, the eagle of the waste,
Alike at present, and throughout the past.
Once more amid his native element,
With unblench'd eye he keeps his bold ascent.
His pride may not be seen. Too deep the source
For hasty glance to mark its innate force ;
And far too high his eminence to need
Assertion of that rank which all concede.
I envy not his life of grander aim,
Incessant chasing of the phantom fame,
Heart-sickening failure, hazardous emprise,
All that torments, and nought that satisfies."

Cold was the greeting of the approaching chief
With Israël's captains, and their parlance brief ;
He grasp'd the reins that lay without a hand,
And straight assum'd the functions of command.

To Ammon's king a haughty message sent,
"What rights demand you, what offence re-
sent,

That thus in hostile guise your bands are led
Within our land the waste of war to spread?"

Jephthah's dread name had reach'd the invading
host ;

Cool'd their hot courage, check'd their ready
boast ;

But pride of numbers, long success, and shame,
Forbade to quit their half-accomplish'd aim.

What nation ever wanted fair pretence
For meditated wrong, or past offence ?

And thus the King of Ammon's children said,
"When your forefathers first in arms array'd

From long Egyptian bondage broke away

To fix in Canaan's realm usurping sway,

They seiz'd in fraud ; and hold by lawless
force,

Those regions lav'd by Jordan's ample course ;

From where swift Arnon's westward stream de-
scends ;

And Jabbok's neighbouring fount its waters
sends,

Thro' southern plains their devious course to take,
Then sink amid the pestilential lake.

These fair domains in justice now restore ;

And Ammon's sons will vex your land no more."

Again the heralds bear his prompt reply :*

" Where Moab's watery meads extended lie ;

* I have ventured to versify this able state-paper of Jephthah, in reply to the causes of war alleged by the king of Ammon ; and I have somewhat amplified it by aid of the more detailed accounts of the events given in the books of Moses. (See Numbers, ch. 21—23.) It is not easy to see the full force of the reasoning without reference to a map ; but the substance of it is, that the Isræelites had cautiously abstained from passing without leave the boundaries of the Ammonites or others whose territories were not given to them by divine command—that the lands in question were in possession of Sihon, king of Heshbon, who made unprovoked war upon them, was subdued, and his country seized and retained by right of conquest. He then, as Matthew Henry quaintly ex-

Or Ammon's soft declivities ascend,
Did Israel ne'er by spoil or march offend.
But when o'er Egypt's eddying sands they
came,
Led by the dusky cloud, and nightly flame ;
Thro' the Red Sea with feet unmoisten'd past,
And pitch'd their tents in Kadesh' rocky waste ;
By these portents was no presumption taught :
In peaceful mood was onward passage sought ;
Not then thy race had been renounced by heaven,
Nor in thy land our heritage was given ;
For Lot and Esau's sons found favour still
Before the Lord, tho' rebels to his will.*
Hence did we ask but land whereon to tread ;
By day the march ; by night the tented bed ;

presses it, pleads the statute of Limitations, and says that if the Ammonites had any just claim, they ought to have preferred it at first, instead of acquiescing for three hundred years, and then, without notice, invading the country to regain possession.

* See Deuteronomy, chap. ii. ver. 19.

Not thro' the fields or vineyards would we stray ;
Nor touch the tempting wells beside our way ;
Without the price nor food nor water taste,
'Till their remotest boundary were past.
From Edom this we vainly sent to crave ;
And Moäb's rulers harsh refusal gave.
In Kadesb then was fix'd our drear abode
To wait the time ordain'd by Jacob's God.

“ It came at length : the banner was outspread ;
Our chosen race the warrior prophet led ;
Heaven's inspiration in his high command,
Jehovah's edicts in his holy hand.
With cautious abstinence we circled round
Ammon's far border, Moäb's eastern bound.
For Arnon's stream a well-known barrier glides,
And from the wilderness your realm divides.
Within that wilderness we pitched our tent ;
To Heshbon's heights a messenger was sent ;
Where Sihon o'er his Amorites bore sway,
And asked, what you denied, a peaceful way.

But Sihon gathered all his armed force ;
And met at Jahaz Israël's onward course :
He met, and sank beneath our conquering sword,
In mad resistance to Jehovah's word.
Then Heaven deliver'd to our firm command
His fenced cities, and his subject land :
These regions now in arms thou would'st redeem,
From Arnon's rugged course to Jabbok's stream ;
From Jordan's bank to where the desert hides
All trace of verdure in its sandy sides.

“ Say, would'st not thou with steady grasp en-
fold

Whate'er thine idol Chemosh gives to hold ?
And shall not we the lands as firmly keep,
From which our God the vanquish'd foe may
sweep ?

What boots it, if in earlier times we trace
These regions torn from thee by Amor's race ?
Amor's they were in undisturb'd domain,
When Israël's rule supplanted Sihon's reign

With us in fresh possession feebly fixt,
Our scatter'd bands with native myriads mixt,
Did Balak, king of Moab, ever wage
Or threaten war for this lost heritage ?
And art thou greater than that potent king ?
Some new discover'd title dost thou bring ?
Or have three hundred years of adverse sway
Refresh'd thy claim, or worn its flaws away ?
Why sought ye not in former times the fight ?
Fixt your dominion, or proclaim'd your right ?
Ye tried it not ; within your bounds ye kept ;
In silent acquiescence have ye slept ;
Till Israël's weakness show'd the tempting prize ;
And wrongful hands support your longing eyes.
Therefore from you, not us, proceeds the wrong,
To God the judgment of our cause belong."

The words of reason meet no willing ear ;
Nor turn the king of Ammon's sons from war.

To Jephthah then the heavenly spirit came,
In holy guidance of his arduous aim ;

That spirit which in Isrâel's chiefs of old
Inspir'd the wise, or erring thought controll'd :
Yet would the frail resolve of wayward man,
With rash presumption taint the wisest plan :
For other's weal the splendid meed attain,
But blend his own reward with lasting pain.

By march circuitous his force he leads
O'er Gilead's rising slopes, and verdant meads ;
To where Manasseh's rougher hills extend,
And Mizpeh's towers in massy strength ascend ;
Mizpeh, that from her rocky height commands
In long prospective Ammon's border lands :
Inures his new-form'd levies to fatigue ;
Of jealous bands cements the recent league ;
Imparts that discipline by short delay,
Which turns the tide of battle's dubious day :
And then with firmer hope, and ampler power,
Assails his foes in unexpected hour.

Yet ere they mingle in the bloody field,
To heavenly power his fervent heart appeal'd ;

“ God of my fathers, if thy will accord
That Ammon’s sons may sink beneath my sword ;
Then shall it be, that when in peace I turn
Once more to visit my remote sojourn,
Whate’er to greet my near approach shall come
Forth from the threshold of my former home,
To thee devoted shall its life be given ;
And burning sacrifice ascend to heaven.”

On Mizpeh’s lofty tower the watchman stands,
And views afar the Ammonitish bands.
They draw fresh hope from Jephthah’s wise delay ;
And seek—at random seek—the trying day.

At length his gather’d host he forward leads,
Prepar’d for hardier toil and bolder deeds.
From Gilead’s hills the well-appointed force
To Reuben’s borders holds its steady course ;
Advancing now, and now declining fight ;
He keeps the hostile army full in sight ;
Till on a rising slope he takes his stand,
And gives for close encounter prompt command.

Along the right extends a deep ravine,
In which the summer streamlet's scarcely seen ;
Tho' strongly foams its equinoctial course,
And tears the craggy banks with torrent force.
Beneath, the tall acacia rears its head ;
And tangled brakes adown the sides are spread.
Close on its brow he plac'd that active band,
Drawn from the glens of Judah's eastern land :
Where the rude goatherd and the hunter wild,
'Climb o'er the cliffs in rude disorder pil'd ;
A band prepar'd to combat on the steep,
Where lowland foot might vainly strive to keep.

Those hardy troops the next position take,
Who cleave the light blue wave of northern lake,
By Hermon's sloping hills encircled round,
Where copious dews refresh the thirsty ground.
Tho' near their sides the spoiler ne'er had come ;
Nor danger hover'd o'er their mountain home ;
They quit the pliant sail and slender oar ;
Leave their dry nets to whiten on the shore ;

Or change the shepherd's hook for heavier spear ;
And seek with ready step the distant war.

Behind them range in well-dispos'd array,
They who from crowded cities take their way.
Of pliant limb, and penetrating thought,
The toiling artisan to war is brought.
From Jericho repos'd in palmy bowers,*
And younger Salem's yet unshaken towers.
These form the western wing, expert and light,
To move along the varying edge of fight.

The central phalanx shows the sturdy swains
From Gilead's woodland slopes and fruitful plains ;
Robust and fierce as Bashan's bulls, that rove
Thro' pastures rich, and ever shady grove ;
Manasseh's parted tribe ; and Gad, who shar'd
Those early fruits which Israel's war prepar'd ;
Who held this outpost of the conquer'd land ;
Alternate taking sword and plough in hand ;

* " And the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees."—Deut. xxxiv. 3.

Content such goodly heritage to gain,
They well renounc'd their unexplor'd domain ;
Nor deem'd magnificent, because unknown,
What other tribes o'er Jordan's banks might own.
With these were mingled that accordant train,
Who dwelt in Galilea's verdant plain :
Compact and firm, in martial movement slow,
They stem the shock, and aim the steady blow.

The hardy dwellers on the barren coast
Form the left wing of Israël's marshall'd host ;
Of slight, yet sinewy frame, they seem allied
To Jephthah's troop, that combats at their side.
That troop still holds its wonted course of war ;
Protects the flank, or hovers in the rear ;
Each mantle folded closely round the breast ;
Each girdle fasten'd, and each spear in rest ;
With gentle touch they guide their steeds of fire ;
And wheel where'er the turns of fight require.*

* “ The original inhabitants of Southern Palestine seem to have had no horses, but the king of Hazor in the northern

Oppos'd to them the warlike bands advance,
Who wield with vigorous arm the massy lance.
These the long range of iron mountains sends,
That far as Moäb's northern tract extends :
A race appropriate to their region's name :
And glorying in the fierce marauder's fame.

The stouter habitants of Ammon's fields,
And those, whom Moäb's lower region yields,
Allies of old in friendly phalanx close ;
And deep and firm the central host compose.

Adverse to Israël's right the squadrons stand,
Who march'd from southern Edom's wealthy
land.

No fancied wrongs provok'd her sons to arms ;
But Israël's growing power had spread alarms ;

part came against Joshua with horses and chariots very many." Josh. xi. 4. And again, just before the time of Jephthah. Judges iv. 3. But the Israelites did not use cavalry or chariots till the time of King David and Solomon. I have therefore given them on to Jephthah's troop.—See Michaelis's Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, ii. 463, &c.

Inspir'd the dread of Canaan's conquer'd state ;
And woke their strong hereditary hate.

At early dawn the loud discordant drum
Proclaims that Ammon's forces onward come :
While silver trumpet's slow and doleful sound,*
Calls Israël's armies to the champaign ground.
Her time-worn veterans near the camels stay,
Alike unfit to meet the furious fray ;
Guards of the camp ; spectators of the fight ;
They catch each passing gleam of sound or sight.

The war-note ceases, as the squadrons spread ;
And nought is heard but quick continuous tread.
In silence each proceeds ; for on the breast
Of bravest warrior sad reflections rest ;
On that lov'd home he ne'er again may meet,
On those, who ne'er his blest return may greet ;
Till active conflict hurries every thought
To that sole end, for which the fight is fought.

* See Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible ; Fragments, vol. ii.
pp. 125 and 229.

But soon the tramp of man and horse subsides,
And the sharp ring of meeting armour grides ;
The shriek, the groan, more frequent interpose ;
And voices rising, as the combat glows.
The shining spears, that late had mov'd erect,
Are hurl'd or level'd to their dire effect :
Helms rise or fall in undulating wave,
As sink the feebler and prevail the brave.

Along the dark ravine the mountaineer
In ambush creeps, ere foeman deem him near ;
Then hurls him struggling headlong down the
steep
With heavy crash that echoes thro' the deep ;
Or downward rolls, by force superior prest,
Till bush or jutting crag his course arrest.

From Ammon's host their iron chariots rush ;
Break the close ranks ; and yielding squadrons
crush ;
Till sidelong comes the well-directed spear,
And strikes the warrior from his lofty car.

These mingled sounds one thrilling discord form ;
Sure indication of that human storm—
Then gradual sink ; all but the buzzing tone
Of frequent voice, or deeply lengthen'd groan.
While feebly languishes the doubtful fight ;
As moves the sun thro' his meridian height.

What cloud of dust beneath the sultry sky
Moves from the sandy knolls, that eastward lie ?
Yet wider, lower, than the pillar'd sand ;
'Tis the quick charge of Jephthah's mounted band.
Full upon Ammon's unprotected right
They burst in plenitude of martial might ;
Bear down the files, that in amazement stand,
Or vainly raise the desultory hand.
While Israël's lines by fresher hope inspir'd,
Resume the deadly strife with arm untir'd.
Yet well the foe sustain'd the losing day ;
Awhile prevailing oft in desperate fray.
And still, as Israël's sword in fatal fall,
Made ghastly breaches in that living wall,

Forth from the rear undaunted warriors stept,
To fill the place their comrades vainly kept.
Till baffled, spiritless, in broken rank,
They sought unwilling flight, or wounded sank.

On flows the stream of war: the furious race
Of quick avoidance and vindictive chace.
But o'er a stiller scene the sun is set
Where first in mutual shock the torrents met.

Yet ere to "cold obstruction" and decay
The wreck of mortal fabric pass away,
What varied sufferings rack their closing hours;
Inflame the mind, or deaden all its powers.
No tumult glows, nor other sound is heard,
Than scream and flutter of the ravenous bird,
That wheels from high to seize the plenteous feast
By man prepar'd for this unbidden guest.
The step of those along the plain who wind
In eager search of them they fear to find;
The feeble moan, the armour's ringing sound,
Where one essays to crawl along the ground,

Unconscious where, yet dreading to remain,
Tho' with each motion throbs the wound again ;
Or struggles from beneath th' incumbent heap,
Where friend and foe in hateful union sleep;
Or yet enough of ebbing life retain
To feel disquietude and added pain.
Some long impatient for the dewy eve
Their fever's growing fury to relieve.

The son of Israël who victorious fought,
Feebly consoled by patriotic thought,
Beside him sees a lov'd relation kneel
To mourn the wounds beyond his power to heal.
The fierce invader, desperate of relief,
Yields to no feeling of unmanly grief;
But faintly seeks to strike his wounded foe,
Who sunk beside him from the mutual blow.

Silent, not tranquil ; motionless in life,
His veteran comrade mourns the fruitless strife ;
The baffled hope of plunder that allur'd ;
His toil and agonies in vain endur'd.

On flows the stream of fight—the faint, the
strong,

In desultory tumult borne along.

E'en from Aroer's walls to Minnith's tower
Where twenty cities rose in ample power ;
Far as the purple vineyards' southern plain,
The land was strewn with myriads of the slain ;
Till hot pursuit and slaughter sated cease ;
And humbled Ammon asks ignoble peace.

END OF CANTO III.

Canto the Fourth.

THE SACRIFICE.

Τοῦτο δέ γ' ἐστὶ τὸ καλὸν σφαλερόν·
 Καὶ τὸ φιλότιμον
 Γλυκὺ μὲν, λυπῆι δὲ προσιστάμενον·
 Τοτὲ μὲν τα θεῶν οὐκ ὀρθώθεντ'
 Ἀνέτρεψε βίον.

EURIP. IPHIG. IN AUL. 21.

“ This honor is on slippery summer seated :
 And thirst of glory, sweet in its first slaking,
 Drains at the last a cup of bitterness.
 Sometimes our sacred rites not well adjusted
 Subvert the bliss of life.”

G. P.

. . Δίδωμι σῶμα τοῦμὸν Ἑλλάδι
 Θύετ'· ἐκπορθεῖτε· ταῦτα γὰρ μνημεῖά μου
 Καὶ παῖδες οὗτοι, καὶ γάμοι, καὶ δόξ' ἐμὴ·

ID. 1397.

. . “ I give my life to Greece.
 Complete the sacrifice ; lay Troy in ruins ;
 For these shall be my monumental stones ;
 And these my nuptials, children, and renown.”

G. P.

CANTO IV.

THE SACRIFICE.

THRO' Jephthah's half-deserted tents the day
In melancholy sameness wears away.
No more the tale and wild Arabian song,
In careless glee the milking hour prolong.
The maids and matrons force a feeble smile,
As wonted tasks the tedious hours beguile.
While childhood, ever restless, brisk and gay,
Intently drives its desultory play :
Yet pauses oft, and asks with anxious face,
Why stay so long their fathers at the chase ;
And youth unequal yet to wield the spear,
In mimic fight displays the love of war.

Age was there none ; for in that recent band
The young and vigorous only took their stand.

 In one fair bosom other feelings roll
Their secret course and animate her soul :
Well had she marked her sire's impressive tone ;
His brightening brow, his smile before unknown ;
Drunk his confiding words with eager ear,
While joy and wonder check'd her parting tear.
In sure presage of lasting bliss she waits
For fame and honor shown by favoring fates :
Till the swift messenger from Gilead brings
The tale of conquest o'er confederate kings,
And Jephthah's near approach. Her fancy draws
The picture of a nation's proud applause
In those bright colors fit alone to paint
The future scene unting'd with earthly taint :
And for herself the yet unharbor'd thought ,
From quickly realizing visions caught,
Of princely splendour ; and that envied state
Of matron honor with no vulgar mate ;

The hope that from her progeny may spring
The promis'd Shiloh, Judah's heavenly king.

Warm'd by the view, she dares for once to swerve
From narrow rule of feminine reserve ;
And forward leads the dark-eyed maiden train
To meet the conqueror on the distant plain.
A robe of purest purple clasped with gold,
And silken vest her slender form enfold.
Some Tyrian merchants journeying o'er the waste
Had brought these tokens for protection past.
But then her father deem'd the gorgeous dress
Unfit to shine amid the wilderness :
So had they lain as early visions lay,
Untouch'd, unnotic'd, thro' his clouded day.

In joyful march the warrior troop return
On one last visit to their wild sojourn ;
And then, in blind delusion blest, again
To take that rank their conquering swords regain ;
To quit the careless life they long had led,
For stately mansion, and a restless bed ;

The city's splendor, and the gloomy mind ;
The vain regret for joys they left behind ;
The tempting cares of civilized pursuit ;
The brilliant blossom, and the bitter fruit.
With prouder step, and gayer thought they tread,
Their country's new-rai's'd sovereign at their head.
Amaz'd he sees th' approaching female band,
Bright timbrels glancing in each lifted hand :
In stately dance their graceful forms are flung :
While thus in descant wild his daughter foremost
 sung.*

1.

O praise ye the Lord with the timbrel and song,
For protecting his chosen from insult and wrong.
Far and oft o'er their borders the Moabite past ;
And vainly they mourn'd for his havoc and waste ;

* This song, which I have attributed to Jephthah's daughter, is chiefly taken from that of Deborah.—Judges, chap. v.

As they fled from his course in fatigue and
affright,
Thro' the heats of the noon, or the dews of the
night,
Not a shield nor a spear among thousands was
seen,
Nor a semblance remain'd of what Israël had been.

2.

The noise of the archers was heard at the well :
But no damsel return'd of the foray to tell,
In captivity doom'd for an Ammonite Lord,
To weave his rich vesture, and garnish his board.
'Thro' thickets and by-paths the traveller crept,
While the highways and champaign by foemen
were swept :
For no chieftain arose who with martial array,
Could have chas'd from their fields the despoiler
away.

3.

From the turrets of Salem the watchman espied
The marauders advancing in boldness and pride ;
For between them had Jordan in vain interpos'd
His wide flowing stream by deep barriers enclos'd ;
As the lion retires from the waters that swell
O'er the bushes and banks where he wonted to
 dwell ;*
So the chief that alone could have chas'd them
 away,
Was doom'd from his country in exile to stray.

4.

No more at the hamlet might herdsman abide ;
And the husbandman ploughed with his sword by
 his side,

* “ Behold he shall come up, like a lion from the swelling of Jordan.”—Jeremiah xlix. 19.

As they sought for the shelter that cities command,

The villages ceased in the desolate land.

The hare on the hearth-stone, the wolf in the shed,

And the chacal had made in their ruins his bed ;

While the hand that could save, and the head that could guide,

Were rejected by Gilead's injustice and pride.

5.

They have turn'd from the gods, they in madness ador'd ;

They have seen their sole hope in resuming the sword.

But why 'mid his sheepfolds did Ephraim remain,

When the tents of his brethren were crowding the plain ?

Full dearly the forfeit of falsehood he'd pay,
Nor escape from the proof which his accents be-
tray.*

And where was the warrior of wisdom and fire,
Who could muster their hosts, and to combat in-
spire ?

6.

They thought of the chief, who the desert had trod ;
In humility hastened to Jephthah's abode.
The hero relented ; he marshall'd the fight ;
'Twas his prudence and skill gave them courage
and might.

* The men of Ephraim had shown reluctance to oppose the Ammonites ; they were therefore distrusted by Jephthah, and not summoned to join his array. At this they affected great indignation ; rose in arms ; and attacked the men of Gilead. The real grievance probably was, that they obtained no share of the booty. Jephthah defeated them, and detected the fugitives who denied their tribe, by their provincial pronunciation of the word " Shibboleth."—Judges, ch. xii.

When the combat had slacken'd his warriors advance,

'Twas the strength of their sinew, the point of their lance,

That turn'd the still wavering fate of the day,
And chas'd from their land the despoiler away.

7.

Now shall Israël exult in his glories again,
For his sons that are sav'd, and the foe that is slain ;

And re-echo the song of deliverance and glee,
From the sands of the desert to those of the sea.
For the arm of the exile hath shielded his breast,
And torn the gay plume from the Ammonite's crest.

As the king of the vultures he stoop'd to his prey,
But the desert's strong eagle has chas'd him away.

As ceas'd the strain, her timid eye she rais'd,
Then mute and fearful on her father gaz'd :
For not the pride of triumph mark'd his brow ;
But signs of anguish unperceiv'd till now ;
Emotions half suppress amid the song,
That rous'd and bore his glowing thoughts along.
Yet bursts the torrent with redoubled force,
When sinks the mound that stay'd awhile its course ;
So Jephthah gave his stifled feelings vent,
Clench'd his firm hand, his gather'd mantle rent.

“ Low hast thou brought my now unenvied head,
And crush'd the hope that o'er mine offspring spread.
O wherefore first would thine unbidden feet
O'erstep the tents our homeward march to meet ?
My hasty lip has breath'd the fatal vow ;
Nor change, nor ransom, laws divine allow.
Devote to God, thy blameless life is cast,
And all our future darkens like the past.”

Gay woman mounts on Fortune's swelling tide,
Inflam'd by joy, and overborne with pride ;

In giddy transport crowds redundant sail,
And steers unsteady to the favouring gale.
Yet come the storm, or sudden, or foreseen,
She meets the dark reverse with dauntless mien ;
Sustains and soothes the partners of her woe,
While man's stern courage quails beneath the blow ;
With patient bosom stems the threatening blast,
And calmly, firmly, struggles to the last.

So felt and acted in that trying hour
The desert's child, with more than manly power ;
Her blooming cheek assum'd a pallid hue ;
But calm her features, and her tears were few,
As meekly thus she said, " Mine honoured sire,
If urg'd by glory's hope, or patriot fire ;
If from thy lips the fatal words have sped,
That mark my life, or rank me with the dead ;
If God hath heard, and listen'd to thy call,
My head shall seal the price of Ammon's fall."

One supplicating look to Heaven she cast,
One thought on prospects just perceiv'd and past,

And then resum'd—" This simple boon concede,
Ere yet my dreadful sentence be decreed ;
Two fleeting moons for thy lost child allow,
Untouch'd, unfetter'd, by the deadly vow,
To roam o'er mountain heights and blooming vales,
Endear'd to early thought, in Gilead's tales.
There with these lov'd companions to lament
That hopeless lonely lot which fate has sent :
And summon courage for my dreary task :
'Tis all thou now canst give, or I may ask."
" Go," said her sire, his languid head he bent,
Took her cold hand, and led her to the tent.

A day's short journey bears the destin'd maid
To scenes in nature's loveliest garb array'd.*

* " We continued our journey over this elevated tract," (the Eastern part of Gilead,) " continuing to behold with surprise and admiration a beautiful country on all sides of us ; its plains covered with a fertile soil ; its hills clothed with forests ; at every new turn presenting the most magnificent landscapes that could be imagined. Among the trees the oak was frequently to be seen."—Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, 327.

As yet her eye had dwelt but on the plain ;
Its dusky verdure, and degenerate grain ;
The turbid stream, or dry deserted bed ;
And rocks in dull unvarying whiteness spread.
Yet when on westward journey mov'd the band,
And caught some glimpse of Gilead's fairer land ;
Of hills in dimly purpled grandeur seen,
Or ting'd at eve with edge of golden sheen :
She long'd the boasted regions to behold
Which that attractive barrier might unfold.

Of untried joys expectance may deceive ;
And o'er defective good the heart may grieve ;
But nature's wilder beauty ne'er betrays
The hopes that bold imaginings may raise.

Thus for a space the wide and winding vale,
The soothing influence of the scented gale ;
The curling oak expanded o'er her head,
The palm and vine in native boldness spread,
The river rushing thro' the stony steep ;
The narrow glen, precipitous and deep ;

Dispel the pangs yet indistinctly known,
And fill her heart with transport not its own.
She shuns the mention of impending fate,
And deems reflection cannot come too late.
Her faithful damsels, as the hills unfold
The swelling eminence or rocky hold,
With searching eyes explore the varying view,
That shows at every turn an aspect new.
But the full stream of feeling that supplied
Her soul with high resolve and filial pride,
Was ebbing fast away, when ceas'd the care
Her sire's embitter'd hours to soothe and share.
And active memory, never long repress,
Stirs each dark image slumbering in her breast.
At first the form is indistinctly view'd,
And quickly shunn'd, as quickly would intrude.
Till the stern phantom shows his plainer shape,
Besets her steps, and suffers no escape.
Full on the mental vision bursts anew
Her future lot, in dark yet clearer hue.

Each form of varied ill she well surveys,
Bends on the dread resolve a torpid gaze ;
Beholds the wreck of plans matur'd in vain,
Shrinks from the sight, yet turns to look again.
With agitated step and faltering gasp
She clasps those hands no other hand shall clasp.
Till now familiar with each aspect grown,
To some secluded glen she roams alone,
Whose woody sides o'er-arching throw a gloom
Thro' noon-tide hour, unchequer'd as her doom ;
And there unseen, on mossy bank reclin'd,
Pours her unceasing sorrows to the wind.

1.

Ye waters, that obscurely gush
From out your cavern'd cell,
And slowly gathering onward rush
Thro' this sequester'd dell.

2.

Tho' brake or rock oppose your course,
Ye hasten as ye may ;
And ceaseless urge, with gentle force,
Your pure and devious way.

3.

Till with some nobler stream allied
By nature's great command,
In mingled usefulness ye glide
Throughout the cultur'd land.

4.

So, form'd from childhood's feeble state
Through youth's unsullied years,
The matron seeks her honour'd fate,
In social hopes and fears.

5.

But mine the stream awhile that flows,
Its surface bright expands ;
Then sinks in dark and useless close,
Beneath the barren sands.

When fresh affliction o'er the mind prevails,
When fear of change dismays, and doubt assails,
Benignant consolation gently press'd
May raise the languid, soothe the feverish breast :
Till the worn spirit takes a firmer mood,
In silence and seclusion seeks to brood ;
The shattered fragments of the wreck obtains,
Regards not what is lost, but what remains ;
And slowly bends its energies to meet
That altered lot, which offers no retreat.

So pass'd in musing on the fixt decree,
On all that might have been, or now must be.
The respite brief. Yet each succeeding day
Wore somewhat of the edge of ill away,
And o'er the future pour'd a mellowing ray;

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Show'd in rich lustre, tho' its beams were cold,
A nation's praise to distant ages told.
Too soon its close, yet tedious seem'd the course,
But reason, duty, pride, resum'd their force ;
And down to Gilead's ruling city came
The ready victim to paternal fame.
Firm is her step, and undisturb'd her mien ;
No sigh nor plaint is heard ; no tear is seen ;
No strong emotion on her brow appears,
Though blighted hopes had done the work of years.
And with her come, to see, not share her fate,
The lov'd companions of her virgin state.
Sweet had their solace been, but now it throws
The bitterness of contrast o'er her woes.

Gilead's stern elders, eager for resolve,
Lest Heaven their new-cemented power dissolve ;
Stifling alike compunction's feeble qualm,
And pity's sigh, preserve unvaried calm.

In truer sympathy, beside her stand
The faithful ranks of Jephthah's ancient band ;

With cloak ungirded, with inverted spear,
Their rugged features scarce suppress the tear.
For deep within the fiercest bosom lives
Some gentler feeling, early nature gives;
Relic of what man's fall has not debas'd,
Nor scenes of crime or hardihood effac'd.*
The fount remains, tho' fortune's withering wind
Exhaust the stream, or hardship's frost may bind.
Not e'en the life these lawless rovers sought,
Extinguish'd every source of kindly thought.
They would have lov'd their chief—his fixt reserve
Check'd all communion, but the zeal to serve;
And love that glows but in reflected rays,
Subsided into awe, respect, and praise :
Yet on his infant daughter they would gaze ;
Till came a feeling soften'd and refin'd,
A fair oasis in the desert mind,
Expanding with the damsel's opening bloom,
Now deeply mourning o'er her pending doom.

* See note at the end of the volume.

Her sire receiv'd her with no sire's embrace ;
In mute compunction view'd her alter'd face ;
Each keener mark of anguish well suppress ;
And firmly thus the assembled crowd address :—

“ Elders of Gilead, priests and warriors, now
We meet to perfect this disastrous vow.
Here must it be, for Ephraim ever wrong,
Weak for alliance, in resistance strong,
Refus'd the call to combat on our side,
Yet murmurs at his share of prey denied ;
From Shiloh's altar bars the sacred rite,
And moves against his brethren to the fight.
No matter where—alike its ills invade
The childless parent and the widow'd maid.
Her I devote to God—for her expand
The portals op'd by no returning hand.

“ My path of life has been in darkness thrown,
And hopeless aspirations for renown.
It came at length, in unexpected hour,
The day of glory, and the life of power ;

Beyond or manhood's thought, or dream of youth,
Each air-drawn vision came in settled truth ;
A splendid gleam of contrast to the past,
Shot o'er the sky, but shone too bright to last.
One cloud of heathen darkness crost my mind,
The first, the last,—but left its blight behind.
Withering alike the branches and the stock,
It leaves me on a high and barren rock.
Amid ambition's toils the breast has room
For hours of deepest loneliness and gloom ;
When filial love, and all that home endears,
(Sole solace of my late inglorious years,)
Might yield relief, in grandeur vainly sought,
From anxious effort, and exhausting thought.
This have I lost ; and from her grasp have hurl'd
All the bright prospects of her opening world.
Whate'er my deeds, my honours, and my fame,
No future warrior e'er may boast my name,
The founder of his line. No more I hold
The hallowed hope, all other breasts enfold,
That he whose glorious coming is foretold

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Offspring of mine may rise. No nuptial day
Again shall yield the chance I cast away.
Here on myself this penance I impose,
To move in solitude to life's dull close :
To feel no solace of domestic joy—
Yet much remains, which fate may not destroy.
Not unatton'd have been mine early wrongs,
Not unrenowned my name in Gilead's songs,
And sacred chronicles. To me belongs
The glorious meed of Israel's rescued land ;
His quiet fields, and prosperous command.

“Israel, be thou my child. For thee my care,
(None other now remains my breast to share,)
For thee my hopes arise : to guide thine arm
In peaceful labours and through war's alarm ;
In all that prudence strengthens, valour gains,
I dedicate what yet of life remains.”

EPILOGUE TO JEPHTHAH.

I.

THE realm that Jephthah sav'd, asserts no more
A place among the nations. Chiefs in vain
By conquest or delivering warfare soar,
And fading rank in memory's roll attain.
For soon the good, if aught of good remain,
By future chiefs as restless, proud, or cold,
Is crush'd in fiery vengeance, or disdain.
The tide of power to other shores is roll'd,
And leaves no vestige, save the splendid tale that's
told.

2.

Nor aught survives, but desolate remains,
From earlier effort of mechanic might.
Memphis and lone Palmyra's gorgeous fanes
Were wrung from toil of thousands, to delight
The vanity of names now lost in night.
The Pyramids have felt oblivion's wand,
Tho' yet unscath'd by time or tyrant's spite,
Those monuments of ancient folly stand
To mark the vanish'd wealth of that degenerate land.

3.

Yet is not glory worthless ; nor the thirst
Of everliving fame ; tho' some have soil'd
The virtue with its kindred vice accurst.
Napoleon, Alexander, Cæsar, toiled
For self ; therein was every motive coil'd ;
Tho' in the ruin their ambition wrought
Some ill were swept away. But undefil'd
By mean resolve have patient warriors fought,
And statesmen, sages, bards, mankind's pure welfare
sought.

4.

Man's moral grandeur fades not. They who bind
In public gratitude their chief reward ;
Or bear with obloquy, content to find
The meed which after ages shall award,
No more by falsehood, error, envy marr'd,
Leave in example or enduring good,
Results unperishing. So Jephthah warr'd ;
For Israel's weal renounced the ties of blood,
And all parental hope and tender thought withstood.

END OF JEPHTHAH.

FRAGMENTS.

THE four following pieces were written as part of the poem of “ Jephthah.” A judicious literary friend, Henry Crabb Robinson, suggested that they were too digressive ; and advised their removal. The partiality of an author forbade me to deprive them of existence ; but I have banished them to another part of the volume.

FRAGMENTS.

CONSOLATIONS OF TIME.

*

*

*

*

THE drooping exile, long and vainly sighs
For vales endear'd by youth's enchanting ties;
Till years, familiar make each foreign scene,
And early feelings fainter intervene.
From his torn heart-strings other fibres shoot,
And thro' those later regions twine their root.

In sad bereavement, the survivor mourns,
And each attempted solace wildly spurns;

One source of bliss for ever seems destroy'd ;
The sever'd branch has left a dismal void ;
But future shoots o'erspread the vacant space :
And years obliterate each seeming trace.

The pang of hopeless love, and longer far,
Remains the widowed feeling of despair
In him, who touched by that intenser fire,
Which souls congenial only can inspire,
Had met a soft return from her he sought,
Bask'd in her smile, and shar'd her fondest thought ;
And then had watch'd, in youth and beauty's bloom,
His heart's sole treasure sink into the tomb.
His bliss is closed. The mind of finer tone
No second reign of passion e'er can own.
Alike its force, in slight, or in return,
The flame once cherished, there will ever burn.*

* Long after writing these lines, I met in Moore's *Life of Byron* with a confirmation of my sentiments from one who had felt, what I only could conjecture, the disappointment of the first affection. Speaking of the illusion of this first passion, Lord Byron in one of his letters says, " It is one for which no

His bliss is clos'd ; the zest of life is o'er,
And hope and transport flush his brow no more.
But Time to sad remembrance moulds the pain ;
And prompts the thought they yet may meet again.

joys, no honours, no gifts of fortune, not even wisdom itself, can afford an equivalent, and which, when it has once vanished, returns no more."—Vol. ii. p. 270, n.

I knew Miss Chaworth before her marriage with his rival. She was not beautiful, but there was a soft expression of countenance and an innocent simplicity of manner which prevents my feeling any surprise at the intensity and duration of his affection. The portrait in the illustrations of Byron gives a very imperfect representation of her.

LOST OPPORTUNITY.

*

*

*

*

YET did not foil'd ambition's deadliest sting
That ever-festering recollection bring
Of opportunity neglected, lost ;
Of honor, not by fate, but folly crost.
He, to whom Fortune's varying wheel has shown
A chance of good, he seiz'd not for his own,
With earnest ceaseless penitence revolves
That high distinction lost by weak resolves ;
Recals the past, and builds on it again
A structure vast, magnificent, and vain ;

Gloats on the scene with fancy's straining eye,
Then views the contrast of reality ;
Remorse without attendant guilt endures ;
A secret taint, which every joy obscures :
Still by his unforgiving self alone,
Reproach'd for what he never can atone.

INTOLERANCE.

* * * *

KINGS did not then, by mad ambition driven,
Usurp the high prerogative of Heaven ;
And dare ordain what others should believe ;
What thoughts abjure ; what ordinance receive :
And to what creed they hold, or choose to urge,
Compel by dungeon, scaffold, sword, or scourge,
Or that refin'd device of later date,
When forms of faith became affairs of state ;
When man by passion fired, or lucre led,*
Stamps his red mark on each dissentient head ;

* “ I believe,” says Paley, “ that religious motives have had no more to do in the formation of nine-tenths of the in-

Proclaims him thence unfit for public trust ;
And treads his hopeless victim in the dust :
With insult then explains the wrong away ;
“ We grant you life, and limb, and leave to pray ;
Here is no persecution,” loud they cry :
May God forgive their gross hypocrisy !

tolerant and persecuting laws, which in different countries have been established upon the subject of religion, than they have had to do in England with the making of the game laws. These measures, although they have the Christian religion for their subject, are resolvable into a principle, which Christianity certainly did not plant ; that they who are in possession of power do what they can to keep it.”—Evidences of Christianity, part iii. ch. 7.

LOVE OF GLORY.

* * * *

5.

AND, animated by that heavenly ray,

Hampden with temper'd energy had fought
In field and senate his triumphant way :

Unshaken Washington, whose guiding thought
Cast into shade what Rome or Greece had taught ;

Fayette, who nurtur'd thro' his lengthen'd course,
The Transatlantic scion he had brought :

And Fox ; and Brougham, fertile in resource,
Stretch'd their strong arms against Corruption's
torrent force.

6.

Those nobly seiz'd occasion when to act ;
This made it for himself on hope forlorn ;
Then bursting forth in panoply compact
Of reason and of knowledge, laught to scorn
The soldier's sword against them idly borne.*
Moving before the spirit of his age,
He drew it on to meet a second morn
Of freedom ; and evok'd, in sure presage,
A more than magic power her righteous war to
wage.

* " There have been periods when the country heard with dismay that " the soldier was abroad." That is not the case now. Let the soldier be abroad : in the present age he can do nothing. There is another person abroad, a less dignified, in the eyes of some an insignificant person, whose labors have tended to produce this state of things. The school-master is abroad."—Brougham's Speech on the formation of the Duke of Wellington's Administration.

E X T R A C T S

FROM THE

CONQUEST OF CANAAN.

A CAMBRIDGE PRIZE POEM, A.D. 1809.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

CONQUEST OF CANAAN

HUSH'D was the tumult, hush'd the busy hum
Of Israël's host ; each fainter murmur sunk
In awful stillness ; as the long array
Had reach'd the bank of Jordan's ample stream.
Absorpt in mute suspense, with eager eye
Sichem's rich vales and vine-clad hills they view ;
Yonder Samaria's craggy rocks appear
Fading in distance, here the western plain

Shaded with palms,* beneath whose tufted heads
Strong Jericho's wide-circling walls are seen
In stately grandeur ; while each object gains
A mellow'd radiance from the setting sun.
Fir'd with keen ecstasy, declining Age
Feels o'er his wither'd cheek the flush of youth
Return. The warrior leaning on his lance,
Each nerve impatient quivering for the fight,
In fancy strikes the heathen to the dust.
While blooming maids and way-worn matrons
gaze

With mixt surprise and joy. The novel scene,
To those unused to aught but dreary wilds
And rock-pil'd plains, seems like the sudden work
Of magical delusion. Every breast
Glow with a livelier transport of delight,
From the strong contrast of remember'd ills.

For long had been their toilsome pilgrimage ;
Since, from Egyptian bondage disenthral'd,

* Deut. xxxiv. 3.

Borne by Jehovah's hand on eagles' wings,*
And brought into his guidance, they explor'd
Their anxious course. Amid the trackless waste
Reluctant lingering, had they sojourn'd long
In restless inactivity ; by power
Invisible, resistless, there detain'd.
For them no vineyards pour'd their luscious juice :
No ripening harvests wav'd : the varying year
No varied produce yielded : Nature gave
No cool refreshing stream, no interchange
Of hill and verdant valley to regale
The wearied eye, nor close-embowering grove
The sun's meridian ardor to abate.
No shelter but the feeble tent repell'd
Night's drenching dews, or winds that moist and
 keen
Pierc'd every aching nerve. Slow want consum'd
The languid frame. 'Tho' skies abundant shower'd

* " I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself."—Exodus xix. 4.

Ambrosial food, the pearly manna pall'd
Upon the sickly taste, assuaging scarce
Hunger's corrosive pangs.* The burning earth's
Bright surface gleaming with reflected rays
Diffus'd intolerable day. No shower
It's genial moisture shed. The scanty well
Dried up, no more reliev'd insatiate thirst.
In vain they caught the southern breeze, that
thick

And sultry but augmented inward heat.
Calm rest forsook their burning limbs : yet oft
They heard in restless dreams the grateful sound
Of murmuring rills, or saw redundant Nile
Eluding near approach ; and struggling woke
To sad reality. Oft as by day
Their eye roam'd o'er the expanse of glittering
sand

And undulating air ; in vain conceit
They view'd afar enticing waters roll ;

* Numb. xi. 6, and xxi. 5.

And half-delirious with fierce drought, pursu'd
The fleeting semblance. Oft too, when the spring
Seem'd to reward at length their weary search
With eager ecstacy they scoop'd the stream
To slake the clammy lip ; straight with disgust
Recoiling, cast the bitter draught away.*

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O'er the wide plain they urge their destin'd
course ;

Not unexpected. Long had Fame convey'd
To guilty Canaan's heaven-devoted race
Some faint and mystic rumours of their fate.
Long had they mark'd the " living cloud of war,"
On their wide confines hovering, like the storm,
That rises from the desert's eastern verge.
Nor had they heard without confus'd dismay,
That the fam'd Prophet called to curse their foes,
By Inspiration's ardent power possest,
Reluctant cried, " How goodly are thy tents,

* Exodus xv. 23. Shaw's Travels, p. 379.

O Jacob, that in fair array, like groves
Of cedar or lign-aloes by the stream
Are planted : who can count thy myriad host ?
That, as the famish'd lion, late arous'd
From grim repose, shall crouch not till he seize
His helpless prey, and crush it to the dust
With force resistless."* Oft some transient pang
Of busy conscience might have touch'd their breasts
'Mid scenes of guilty joy : but man, vain man !
Thinks justice long deferr'd will ne'er arrive,
And sinks again to revelry and ease.

To Canaan's farthest verge the tidings spread,
Borne with the speed of terror and dismay.
Silent, appall'd they stand, unconscious where
To seek defence : or from carousals lewd,
And impious midnight orgies start aghast ;
And with tumultuous hurry rush to war.
Vain is the martial preparation : vain
The awful pomp of sacrifice ; or shrieks

* Numbers, xxiii. and xxiv.

Of infant victims, that to Moloch rise
From blazing furnaces ; in vain advance
To gorgeous shrines the virgin's loose-rob'd train,
Tear their bright hair, and stain with purple streams
Their vermil cheeks. Nor crested helm, nor spear,
Nor all the dread habiliments of war
Aught can avail.

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Thro' conquer'd realms the torrent forward rolls
Resistless ; desolation marks its track ;
O'er wasted plains and walled cities sweeps,
Bursts their strong gates, and crushes them to dust.

Yet, ere she sink beneath the whelming tide,
One last convulsive struggle Canaan makes.
As Nature oft, ere ebbing life retire,
Collecting all her latent energies,
Strong effort makes against the strong disease ;
Regains a gleam of renovated health
To light the faded eye, and nerve the arm ;
Then sinks at last beneath its fatal power.

So from despair arous'd, the sinking land
Exerts a feverous strength, again collects
The relics of the sword. Unus'd to war
The peasant issuing from his last retreat,
The time-worn veteran, and the beardless youth,
With maddening valour struggle but to die.

With songs of triumph Judah rends the sky.
Soon from the ruins stately structures rise,
In brighter glory spacious cities shine,
Bend their long walls, and rear their dome-capt
towers.

Yet, Judah, must thy late descendants know,
Worse ills than Canaan felt ; tho' countless flocks
Thro' fertile pastures rove ; and o'er thy plains
Luxuriant harvests wave ; tho' peopled* hills
Glow with the purple radiance of the vine ;
Tho' Ophir's riches crowd thine ample ports ;
Thy stubborn pride, thy gross idolatries,

* The hills of Judea were and are still more populous and cultivated than the plains.—See Shaw's Travels, p. 368.

Provoke the vengeance of offended Heaven.
The heathen relics harass thy repose.
With force resistless Eastern armies sweep,
And lead to distant realms thy captive tribes ;
Long with Euphrates' waters doom'd to mix
Their bitter tears, in sad remembrance mourn
For Zion's hill, for Salem's dear abode,
And on the willow hang their tuneless harps.
Behind, a darker cloud of woes succeeds ;
The Roman eagle hovers o'er his prey,
And tears thy vitals with ferocious swoop.

Ill-fated race ! a name alone remains
Of all thy dread magnificence and strength.
To thee no home, no native country spreads
Her proud endearments, gives and claims alike
Protection ; but thro' every various clime
Dispers'd, thou long must roam ; a race proscrib'd,
Tho' destin'd yet for bliss, and late return
To lands again assign'd thee for thine own ;
While barbarous hordes possess thy hallow'd seats,

And Salem sitting in the palm-tree's shade,*
Disconsolate laments her slow decay.
Ages on ages roll away, and still,
Thy bitter cup of misery is full ;
Still dost thou drain the unexhausted draught ;
And still it mantles to thy pallid lips.

* Judea is typified in some coins of Vespasian, one of which is in my possession, by a disconsolate woman sitting under a palm-tree.—See *Oeconis Imper. Roman. Numism.*, ed. Franc. Mediobarbi, &c. p. 110, &c. Amst. 1717.

O D E

TO

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

“ Return the thoughts of early time,
And feelings rous’d in life’s first day,
Glow in the line and prompt the lay.”

SCOTT’S MARMION, Introd. iii.

“ What are the gay parterre, the chequer’d shade,
The morning bower, the evening colonnade,
But soft recesses for uneasy minds
To sigh unheard in to the passing winds?”

POPE.

THIS Ode was written during a second residence in Trinity College, of which I was then Fellow ; when a long state of bad health had compelled me to retire from the profession of the law, which I was pursuing in London. The last stanza was added just before I quitted the College, on my marriage. One species of merit I may venture to claim ; that it presents not a tissue of imaginary thoughts, but an unadorned picture of real sentiments — of the contrasted impressions excited by the same scenes under different circumstances.

ODE

TO TRINITY COLLEGE.

YE towers, for learning's shelter rear'd,
Ye groves, to science long endear'd,
Amid whose fostering shades, intent
On arduous schemes, the years I spent
From ripening youth to manhood's bloom
That mark of life the future doom :
Again your ever dear retreats
My heart with equal kindness greets.

Yet not again shall e'er return
Those transports of delight,
Which in my breast were wont to burn,
Whene'er ye met my sight.

II.

For well can faithful memory paint
The bosom's varied sentiment ;
When, with firm health, and soul on flame,
From Yorkshire's northern hills I came,
Beneath a milder clime to court
The Muses in their lov'd resort.
The mountain breeze each nerve had strung ;
Each sense in keen expectance hung :
Each feeling of the high-toned soul
Had yielded to the strong control,
And own'd the influence stern and rude
Of nature's wildest solitude.

III.

Then, as delighted and amaz'd,
Insatiate on these scenes I gaz'd,
Oft have I said, "Where Bacon caught
The first faint gleam of manly thought,
That broke on that benighted age
To guide the wanderings of the sage :
Where Newton traced the secret cause
Of moving worlds, and nature's laws :
Where Dryden touched his potent lyre,
With inspiration's earliest fire ;
Ere want the unwilling strain had marr'd,
Or courts debased the venal bard :

IV.

"Here may the ardent youth gain force
In emulation's generous course ;
Ambition's stern resolve may brace,
Ere yet he start in life's long race ;

Feel in success that eager joy,
Which repetition cannot cloy,
Which prompts but to some higher aim,
And spurns the past for future fame.
Or, if the bold attempt should fail,
May learn to stem the adverse gale ;
Pause but a moment, nor in vain,
Redoubled energy to gain ;
And urging his ingenuous toil,
At length the vanquish'd victor foil.

V.

“ And here may he, whom choice shall guide
To venture on the world's rough tide,
Amid forensic strife to steer
Of fame and wealth the grand career ;
And here the embryo statesman learn
To reason, argue, and discern,
Right to maintain, and wrong desery,
Thro' the dark maze of sophistry ;

And seek those fountains, that dispense
The richest streams of eloquence :
Or turn, where history supplies,
How infant nations slowly rise ;
By what progressive means attain,
In arts, and arms, and wealth to reign ;
To revel in luxurious pride ;
While hidden seeds of ruin glide
Thro' each fine fibre, and at length
Corrode the unwieldy specious strength,
Till long corruption have subdued,
And made them fit for servitude.

“ Or oft may mark, amid the gloom
Of empire hastening to its doom,
Some patriotic genius strive
His country's greatness to revive ;
Recall with force regenerate
Each latent virtue of the state,
And for awhile arrest its fate.
Or, if in vain his potent hand
Be stretch'd to help a sinking land,

}

O'erwhelming difficulties brave,
And perish where he could not save.

VI.

“ Such was the lot of later Rome,
When Vice insulted Freedom's tomb ;
When the fierce Goth his myriads led,
And unresisted ravage spread.
Then Belisarius dar'd alone
Safety's cold dictates to disown,
Rous'd a degenerate race to arms,
And steel'd their breasts to war's alarms :
Bursting on the astonish'd foe,
Struck, e'er he felt, the fatal blow ;
Tore from his savage grasp the prey,
And chased him from her realms away.

“ Fir'd by the tale, he spurns repose ;
The young enthusiast's bosom glows
To guide his country thro' the storm,
Corrupted senates to reform,

To disconcert Napoleon's scheme,
And Europe's prostrate states redeem.

VII.

“ Here he, whose placid humble thought
No higher station ever sought,
Than calm and competence can give ;
Content in useful ease to live ;
With modest radiance to shine
Unsullied guide to truth divine ;
For that great mission may prepare,
And learn its mandates to declare,
Unfold the hopes to mortals given,
And point the narrow path to heaven.

VIII.

“ And he, whom eager thirst may urge
To pierce beyond the utmost verge

Of former science, or explore
The rich remains of classic lore ;
Whose mild ambition ne'er would aim
Beyond the meed of learned fame,
May here with social ease unite
What in retirement can delight."

IX.

And oft, when in more pensive mood,
I pace the cloister's solitude,
Among the columns, that sustain
The roof's extensive ponderous plane ;
As thro' the sculptur'd iron gates
The eye at distance penetrates,
Where Cam, that scarcely seems to flow,
Reflects the moon-beam's silvery glow ;
While just beyond, the clustering trees
Are mov'd not by the gentle breeze,
That from the limes on balmy wings
Their soporific fragrance brings ;

The massy fabric seems to stand
A palace in some fairy land.
When all is wrapt in calm profound
Save where the bat would flit around ;
And the lone owl would silence break
With harsh but not unpleasing shriek ;
Or distant flute's soft plaintive note
Dejection soothe, and yet promote.

X.

Then sadder thoughts would intervene,
Attemper'd to the solemn scene.
“ And here,” I've said, “ should wayward fate
Each fairer prospect dissipate ;
Should health or energy too frail
Exhausted in the conflict fail ;
Here may the heart-sick exile come,
Within this kind congenial gloom.

Far from the world's tumultuous crowd,
His baffled schemes and hopes to shroud.*

XI.

Yet little fear'd I in those hours,
When sway'd by fancy's mystic powers
Imaginary scenes I drew,
So soon to prove the presage true ;
To find my short career was run
Ere the keen race seem'd well begun ;
The withering grasp of slow disease
On the firm frame resistless seize ;
The throbbing brow and pallid cheek
Flush with the hectic's fitful streak ;
O'er each acuter sense to feel
Benumbing languor faintly steal ;

* “ And shroud within Saint Hilda's gloom
Her blasted hopes and withered bloom.”

Till every vision fancy drew
Takes that same wan and sickly hue :
Till the exhausted spirit droops
Amid the wreck of shatter'd hopes ;
And turns reluctant in despair
To seek a sad retirement here.

XII.

Vain thought ! With the chang'd medium change
To colours fresh and semblance strange
Both moral and material things,
Ting'd by the passions' hidden springs.

Vain thought ! The torn distemper'd mind
In solitude no cure can find :
Tho' soft seclusion for awhile
Intensest anguish may beguile ;
Tho' memory fondly love to trace,
Past joys associate with the place,

Where life's unclouded morning shone,
Yielding a pleasure long unknown.
Yet soon those kind illusions fade,
Soon is each object disarray'd
Of that delusive blandishment,
Which young imagination lent.

XIII.

Soon on the listless senses pall
The festal pomp of feudal hall,
The organ's swell, and full-ton'd choir,
The vista stretch'd to distant spire,
Thro' opening glades the turrets seen,
The willowy stream, that winds between ;
The cool majestic colonnades,
Lawns ever green, and fragrant shades
Impervious to the scorching heats :
These seem but soft and dull retreats ;

Where the forlorn recluse may brood
On fever'd day-dreams that intrude,
Chase the faint rays of dawning peace,
And cease not but when life shall cease.

XIV.

Yet oft some feeble transient fire
Would momentary hope inspire,
That the bold spirit still may try
To soar from dull obscurity ;
And oft would friendship's soothing balm
Attempt the bitter pang to calm ;
Each hackneyed topic would suggest,
That e'er was urged to mind distress ;
Expatiate on the charms of ease,
And refuge from the world's rough seas ;
How time each keen regret would soothe,
And make life's rugged journey smooth.

XV.

Ah ! no, the fleeting dream is gone ;
The friendly sophistry o'erthrown.
What charms can indolence present
To those on enterprise intent ?
Ask the toil-harden'd mountaineer,
Inur'd to chase the rapid deer
From early dawn to evening's close,
And then upon the hill repose ;
If in some narrow castle pent,
He e'er could deign to feel content ;
Tho' beds of down, and regal state,
And luxury his call await.
Would he not fret with useless rage,
Like captive lion in his cage ?
And say, he found the coarse repast
More grateful to his eager taste

By mountain stream ; more sound the sleep
He snatch'd upon the craggy steep ?

Can time's Lethæan influence
Unfailing remedy dispense ?
Yes, time may seem the wound to heal,
Its deep-struck fibres may conceal ;
But if incautious touch should graze
The treacherous surface it displays ;
The latent venom from below
With rankling virulence will flow.

XVI.

Nor yet of those who here sejournd
Alone my gloomy lot I mourn :
On closer view the thin disguise
Is pierced by disenchanted eyes.

Here the unfriended churchman pines,
And half the bliss of life resigns,

Bound by those harsh monastic rules,*
The last remains of popish schools.
Entire exclusion less aggrieves
Than doubt that lures, delays, deceives,
For then the willing votary knows
At once the good that he foregoes.
But here, with sanguine love elate,
Condemn'd the lingering years to wait ;
Sickening in tedious indolence,
Hope long deferr'd, and slow suspense ;
He sees each fascinating grace
Fade from his mistress' angel face :
Till, when the late preferment comes,
Inveterate discontent benumbs
Those finer feelings youth might prove,
And friendship takes the place of love.

* " Socios Collegiorum maritos esse non permittimus."

STAT. ACAD. CANT.

XVII.

Yet more unhappy, who disdains
To seize the good that still remains.
Mark his sunk eye ; not that the mien
Of waning years, resign'd, serene.
Like ancient captive, loath to roam
From dungeons, time has made his home ;
He deem'd too much of life gone by,
Fate had dissolv'd each early tie,
And left no wish, but here to die ;
In walls no social circle cheers,
Which habitude alone endears.
For him no relatives assuage
The sure infirmities of age ;
No tender cares disease beguile,
And make e'en sickness wear a smile :
His old associates are gone ;
And here, unheeded and alone,

}

The remnant of his cheerless days
In selfish apathy decays.

XVIII.

Fair scenes, adieu ! ye once had power
To fascinate youth's ardent hour ;
Awhile ye soften'd later woes,
And lull'd the mind to short repose.
The charm is gone : yet ne'er shall fade
The strong attachment ye convey'd ;
And still, whene'er ye meet my eye,
Shall fond remembrance prompt a sigh.
Fair scenes, adieu ! ere yet too late,
Resolv'd to try a different fate,
Her waken'd votary Wisdom calls,
To quit in haste these charmed walls ;
In less recluse abodes to live ;
And seek content, ye cannot give.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



WRITTEN FOR THE ALBUM OF
MISS PHILOTHEA THOMPSON,
OF
COTTINGHAM CASTLE, YORKSHIRE.

A.D. 1821.

THE ancient and magnificent castle of Cottingham, which covered two acres of ground, formerly belonged to the Lords de Stuteville. The possessor, in the time of King John, entertained that sovereign at his mansion, and then obtained a licence to fortify it. By the marriage of an heiress it afterwards passed into the family of Wake.

There is a tradition that King Henry the Eighth

was enamoured of the beautiful Lady Wake; and that when at Hull he sent a message to Lord Wake, intimating his intention of visiting him the next day at the castle. But in the intervening night it was burnt to the ground. This was done by the steward, in obedience to his master's command; or, as some say, by the lady herself. The King offered to give two thousand pounds towards rebuilding it, but the donation was for obvious reasons probably declined, as the castle remained in ruins.

The present mansion is a modern edifice, built in the castellated style, by the late Thomas Thompson, Esq., M. P. for Midhurst. His youngest son, Charles William, from early youth, had educated himself for the profession of a soldier. After graduating at Cambridge, he entered into the Sicilian regiment, and then into the foot-guards. His regiment joined the British army in Spain, under the Duke of Wellington. After crossing the Pyrenees, he fell in the last battle that took place, before the downfall of Napoleon.

I have seen a dungeon like that alluded to in stanza 3, which was some years ago discovered at Bolton Castle in Wensleydale. In clearing away the rubbish from a dungeon sufficiently dismal to satisfy any ordinary feelings of cruelty or revenge, a square opening was discovered in the floor with a groove as for a trap-door. Below was a small damp apartment cut in the solid rock, without any other orifice for light or air. A ring or staple still existed in the wall, to which the captives had probably been chained.

The "Convent of Cotingham," as it is styled in the seal still extant, was founded in 1322, for canons of the order of St. Augustin.

ON COTTINGHAM CASTLE, YORKSHIRE,

THE SEAT OF

THOMAS THOMPSON, ESQ.

1.

GONE are those envied days of feudal state,
When, on the warrior chieftains frequent call
His gathering crowds of ready vassals wait,
Or swell the splendor of his gothic hall ;
Where lance and shield adorn the sculptur'd wall,
And gorgeous banners wave those arms among ;
While knight and baron, squire and vassal, all
At once around their different tables throng,
Partake the plenteous feast, and list the minstrel's
song.

2.

Gone are the days of grave monastic state,
When the fair convent oft we might espy,
To the lorn pilgrim opening friendly gate,
Or way-worn traveller that journeyed nigh :
A calm retreat for early piety,
Or him, whose blasted hopes had late unbound
In his torn bosom every worldly tie.
The ruins of those cells no more are found,
And Stuteville's strong towers are levelled with the
ground.

3.

I mourn them not—for with that feudal state
And barbarous magnificence, are gone
Hereditary strife, blood-thirsty hate,
The dark low dungeon with its captive lone
Enchain'd to narrow walls of dripping stone ;
When the proud lord, alike of lawless power
Tyrant and victim, safety found alone

For the chaste inmate of the female bower,
Amid the burning wreck of his own hall and
tower.

4.

And with the convent's stately shrines are gone
Their fancied miracles and heathen taint ;
The foreign accents breath'd to block of stone,
Or soul of wild enthusiast termed a saint.
Gone are those rules the God of love that paint,
Delighting in the sufferings of mankind ;
And pleased by every well-devis'd restraint,
That stifles all our duties to our kind,
Rending each kindred claim around the heart en-
twin'd.

5.

I mourn them not ; for fairer turrets rear
Their gothic heads o'er tracts of field and flood ;
While late refinement dwells within ; and here
Their lord (who in the senate long had stood,

Join'd with that generous band of wise and
good,
That fought fair freedom's leaguer'd rock to save,
And strong Corruption's wide misrule withstood)
Finds surer calm than cell or cowl e'er gave ;
And looks with firmer hope to bliss beyond the
grave.

6.

The votary may retire with banner furl'd,
Well pleas'd the doubtful combat to refuse ;
But here Philothea shrinks not from the world,
Whose grosser vanities she well eschews ;
And pious as the nun, her task pursues,
In all that brightens bliss or dries the tear :
Each filial fond attention still renews
To her whose sense refin'd, and faith sincere,
Have youth and health adorn'd ; will age and
sickness cheer.

7.

And from these walls hath issued to the war,

One who their kind allurements could forego,
With heart as brave, and motive purer far

Than boasted age of chivalry might show.

His thirst of all, that knowledge could bestow,
Strategic lore and scientific light ;

His love of freedom ; the romantic glow
That flush'd his soul on Roncesvalle's height,
Have sunk on Gallia's plain immers'd in early
night.

TO MRS. THOMAS ROBINSON

ON HER RETURN FROM INDIA.

WRITTEN FOR HER ALBUM, A.D. 1826.

I.

IN fresh remembrance, lady, gleam'd thine eye

Of quick intelligence, thy form and mien

Of overawing grandeur ; and the high

Endowments of thy mind ; tho' long unseen,

Tho' half the globe was interpos'd between.

New ties have bound thee to that eastern shore ;

Yet did no sigh for England intervene,

No wish to hear the western ocean's roar,

And see thy country, kindred, early friends once
more.

2.

Again we greet thee in thy native land.

But where the wonted smile? the roseate
streak?

Affliction hath past o'er thee; and the hand

Of India's sun hath touch'd thy faded cheek.

And hither comest thou, the solace weak
Of faintly renovated health to find;

Again beneath those sultry skies to seek
Him, who still owns thy hand, thy heart, thy mind;
And leave the remnant of thine offspring far be-
hind.

3.

Did lucre lure him to that withering clime?

Or glory call him to the battle plain?

Runs he the course of rapine, fraud, or crime,

Some dregs of injur'd India's wealth to drain?

He went, ambassador of Heaven, to train
The heathen to his Saviour's pure commands,
And give the Indian more than worldly gain.
His warfare stretches o'er no earthly lands :
His wealth is not contain'd in mansions made with
hands.

S T A N Z A S

ON THE

ANCIENT OAKS AT CRIX, ESSEX,

THE SEAT OF

SAMUEL SHAEN, ESQ.

Why dwells the mind with more serene delight
On mouldering relics of an age o'erpast,
Than scenes of freshest verdure can excite ;
Or structure elegant, entire, and vast ?
Is it that other days their shadows cast ;
And thus in dim resemblances return ;
That vanish'd superstitions seem to last ;
Customs revive ; extinguish'd passions burn ;
And voice of sage or hero breathe from out their urn ?

2.

Thus do we slight the beauteous bowers that
spread

Their soft protection from the noonday sky ;
The shrub that waves its gaily blossom'd head ;
Lawn, path, parterre, in rich variety ;
All that the smell, sight, taste, can gratify
With fragrance, flower, and fruit of other lands :

From these we turn to where the oak on high
His branches curving to the ground expands ;
And still in withering pride the waste of Time
withstands.

3.

No other hand may touch their hallow'd shoots ;
But his hath left the wounds of many a year
And scars indelible. The wreathed roots
Shew their deep cavities. Above appear

The dry grey boughs, like antlers of the deer :
While others, stricken with disease, display
Amid the sombre green their foliage sere :
The fallen branch lies mouldering as it may
Beside the trunk, that sinks in more august decay.

4.

I turn to gaze upon the oaks of Crix,
To muse upon the scenes they could unfold :
And vainly strive their origin to fix,
When oldest records note them then as old.
With mental eye the Druids I behold
In long array ; the snow white mantle spread ;
The sever'd branch enwrapp'd within its fold ;
To grassy altar human victims led ;
While in those gloomy rites a nation's fate is read.

5.

These pass away ; and on the summit lights
The Roman eagle with his gory beak.

Beneath his wing the fierce centurion smites
The baffled native, resolute tho' weak.
He mounts again his southern nest to seek,
And vanishes from view. In mingling rush
Dane, Briton, Saxon, mutual vengeance wreak :
Till comes the Norman, each alike to crush ;
And in sepulchral calm their quenchless discords
hush.

6.

The feudal chieftain offers unoppos'd
His human sacrifice to pride or hate,
More frequent than the Druid's ; though dispos'd
With less of solemn pomp to grace their fate.
The churchman moves in more than princely
state ;
And with unearthly weapon cows the bold,
His kingdom of this world to subjugate :
The collar'd bondman tends for each the fold ;
The roebuck ranges wild ; the outlaw forms his hold.

7.

But mingling with these unattractive forms
Comes many a group of gaiety and grace.
Short sunny gleams relieve the frequent storms :
Wild chivalry the oppressor oft may chase ;
While intervening time as well as space
Softens each harsher feature we pourtray ;
Yet in each pleasure lurks of ill the trace,
In bloody tournament, in festal fray,
And mental darkness mixt with virtue's fairest
ray.

8.

Yet kindly come these visions of the past ;
And kindly their realities are fled.
The feudal trunk its vigorous leaves hath cast ;
And feebly strives to rear its canker'd head :

The tree of knowledge rises in its stead.
Each shoot to firmness adamantine grows ;
Deep strikes the root, and wide the branches
spread ;
Time's temper'd scythe with futile effort mows ;
And Tyranny's sharp axe is shiver'd with its
blows.

“LATE COMES THE BOON.”

I.

LATE comes the boon I panted for in youth,
 And sought in manhood, tho' with distant aim ;
 Till o'er my bosom came the bitter truth,
 That slow disease had marr'd the languid frame
 For full enjoyment or pursuit of fame.
 Yet still I gaz'd upon the rainbow's hue,
 And thought to reach it when on earth it came ;
 But tho' it far receded from my view,
 My restless heart refus'd to breathe a last adieu.

2.

Late comes the boon—I grasp it with delight.

Tho' half a century hath press'd my head ;
Returning health hath somewhat of the light
And spring of early youth within me shed.

Mine be the prayer by young Achilles sped.
No grovelling late existence I desire.

Quickly may waste the oil by which 'tis fed ;
But pure and brilliant be the lamp's late fire
Afar perceiv'd and felt ; then all at once expire.

A. D. 1833.

N O T E

To Page 87, line 6.

THIS remark is general, and applies to persons whose life has been more calculated to stifle pure and kindly feelings than that of the followers of Jephthah. Its justice may perhaps be doubted by some, and can only appear from instances which are occasionally observed. That mentioned by Dr. Moore, in his journal of a Residence in France, A.D. 1792, is so well known that I need not extract it at length. “Two men covered with blood, who had been employed in killing the prisoners, and attended in expectation of the signal for despatching M. Bertrand, seemed surprised, but not displeased, at the unusual order” (for his release.) In conducting him through the court of the prison, they inquired if he had any relatives to whose house he wished to go. On his answering in the affirmative, they urgently entreated permission to be present at the interview. He reluctantly assented. They accordingly accompanied him; “were witnesses to the happiness they all manifested; refused the money which M. Bertrand offered, declaring that they were already paid for

accompanying him in the only way they desired."—*Moore's Journal of a Residence in France*, Oct. 26th, 1792.

Another instance of this moral phenomenon was related to me by the barrister to whom it occurred. A man who had led a life of robbery and profligacy, was indicted at the Huntingdonshire assizes for the murder of the aged rector of an adjoining parish. It was perpetrated on a summer's forenoon at his parsonage, while the rest of the family were absent at the hay-field. On the trial three counsel appeared for the prosecution, none for the prisoner. The judge, Baron Alexander, suggested to a barrister present to watch the defence. He did so; strenuously argued several points of law; and weakened by his cross-examinations the evidence, which was entirely circumstantial. The judge summed up favourably for the prisoner. While the jury were withdrawn, and there was reason to expect an acquittal, the prisoner sent the gaoler to his counsel to thank him for his efforts during the long trial, and to state that he had no money to offer, but begged him to accept his watch. It was of course declined. The prisoner was convicted, and afterwards confessed the crime.

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